

**THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO PEACE
ACCORDS: ONE YEAR LATER**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

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THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO PEACE ACCORDS: ONE YEAR LATER

THURSDAY, JULY 22, 2004

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2 o'clock p.m., in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ROYCE. This hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa will come to order. The Democratic Republic of Congo is in a challenging and a very troubled political transition. Its peace process, several years in the making, is set to lead to national elections next June. Progress in setting the stage for elections, however, has been very slow. The power-sharing government established last year has been fractious, failing to produce legislation required to conduct elections most Congolese view as essential to establishing a legitimate national government.

Little progress has been made disarming and integrating rebel factions into the national army, and there have been two coup attempts against President Joseph Kabila this year. Violence continues to plague eastern Congo, where rebel groups have clashed with United Nations peacekeepers and with government forces.

This turmoil has perpetuated the grave humanitarian conditions that have existed since the Rwandan genocide erupted 10 years ago. An estimated 3.5 million Congolese, mainly in the east, have perished over the last 6 or so years due to war-related starvation and disease. Yes, that is 3.5 million who have died.

The MONUC peacekeeping operation in the DRC has grown in size and in scope. It currently fields over 10,000 troops. MONUC has been rightly criticized for failing to protect civilians, most recently in Bukavu, and failing to disarm and reintegrate rebel forces. The MONUC mandate is up for renewal at the end of the month. We can renew MONUC, and perhaps we should even increase its size, but we had better ask ourselves some challenging questions impacting its effectiveness.

A United Nations Panel of Experts report issued this week concludes that Rwanda directly backed the rebel group that seized Bukavu. This is serious. Ugandan military involvement in the DRC was also flagged. The United Nations report also found that Rwanda maintains military positions in North Kivu. This is the latest indication that the Rwandan government is disregarding its 2002 commitment to keep its military out of eastern DRC. The humani-

tarian situation there is horrific. Are we playing all our cards with Rwanda to end its meddling in eastern Congo? I don't think we are.

MONUC is looking to establish joint border patrols with DRC government forces. A brilliant idea. Border security has been a problem for years. Why is a plan still on the drawing board? Rwanda's true security interest lies with a unified and stable DRC, not a decayed state.

This conflict, I am afraid, is driven by natural resource exploitation. This was a theme of the DRC hearing this Subcommittee held last year. United Nations and other reports have identified Rwanda and other countries as maintaining considerable illicit commercial interests in the DRC. Rwandans recently instigated clear cutting in Virunga National Park, according to the recent United Nations report. What are the United States and the United Nations doing to deter this scramble for resources in the DRC?

I am interested in hearing from the Administration also about the Skinkolobwe mine. United Nations investigators this week warned that massive illicit digging at this mine, which supplied the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombs, threatens to put nuclear ore into terrorist hands.

With MONUC, the United States and the international community are making a substantial commitment to the Congolese people. With competing demands for United Nations peacekeeping resources throughout the world, progress is expected and urgently needed. Yet, it is unclear to me—and I was in the DRC several weeks ago—it is unclear to me whether the country's political class is willing to seize this opportunity and forge a stable country, despite the humanitarian suffering of their fellow countrymen.

Talk of delayed elections, which I heard in Kinshasa, is a non-starter. Ambassador William Swing, the United Nations representative to the DRC, has been telling the Congolese that they will not see another MONUC-like investment should it fail. I think he is right. Should MONUC fail, the DRC is likely to remain a divided country and it is likely to remain devastated well into the future with grave humanitarian consequences for the Congolese people. This may be the DRC's last chance. Flaws and all, MONUC is certainly its best chance for peace.

I will now turn to our Ranking Member, Mr. Payne of New Jersey, for his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Royce follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The following is the opening statement of Africa Subcommittee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA-40) at this afternoon's hearing on the peace accord in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

"The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is in a challenging, and troubled, political transition. Its peace process, several years in the making, is set to lead to national elections next June. Progress in setting the stage for elections, however, has been very slow. The power-sharing government established last year has been fractious, failing to produce legislation required to conduct the elections most Congolese view as essential to establishing a legitimate national government. Little progress has been made disarming and integrating rebel factions into the national army, and there have been two coup attempts against President Joseph Kabila this year. Violence continues to plague eastern Congo, where rebel groups have clashed with U.N. peacekeepers and government forces. This turmoil has perpetuated the grave hu-

manitarian conditions that have existed since the Rwandan genocide erupted ten years ago. An estimated 3.5 million Congolese, mainly in the east, have perished over the last six or so years due to war-related starvation and disease. Yes, 3.5 million dead.

“The MONUC peacekeeping operation in the DRC has grown in size and scope, so that it currently fields over 10,000 troops. MONUC has been rightly criticized for failing to protect civilians, most recently in Bukavu, and failing to disarm and reintegrate rebel forces. The MONUC mandate is up for renewal at the end of the month. We can renew MONUC, perhaps we should even increase its size. But, we had better ask ourselves some challenging questions impacting its effectiveness.

“A U.N. Panel of Experts report issued this week concludes that Rwanda directly backed the rebel group that seized Bukavu. This is serious. Ugandan military involvement in the DRC was also flagged. The U.N. report also found that Rwanda maintains military positions in North Kivu. This is the latest indication that the Rwandan government is disregarding its 2002 commitment to keep its military out of eastern DRC. The humanitarian situation there is horrific. Are we playing all our cards with Rwanda to end its meddling? I don't think so.

“MONUC is looking to establish joint border patrols with DRC government forces. Border security has been a problem for years. Why is a plan still on the drawing board? Rwanda's true security interest lies with a unified and stable DRC, not a decayed state.

“This conflict is driven by natural resource exploitation. This was a theme of the DRC hearing this Subcommittee held last year. U.N. and other reports have identified Rwanda and other countries as maintaining considerable illicit commercial interests in the DRC. Rwandans recently instigated clear cutting in Virunga National Park, according to the recent U.N. report. What are the U.S. and the U.N. doing to deter this scramble for resources? I am interested in hearing from the Administration about the Skinkolobwe mine. U.N. investigators this week warned that massive illicit digging at this mine—which supplied the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombs—threatens to put nuclear ore into terrorist hands.

“With MONUC, the U.S. and the international community are making a substantial commitment to the Congolese people. With competing demands for UN peacekeeping resources throughout the world, progress is expected, and urgently needed. Yet, it is unclear to me—and I was in the DRC late last month—whether the country's political class is willing to seize this opportunity and forge a stable country, despite the humanitarian suffering of their fellow countrymen. Talk of delayed elections—which I heard in Kinshasa—is a non-starter. Ambassador William Swing, the U.N. representative to the DRC, has been telling the Congolese that they will not see another MONUC-like investment, should it fail. He is right. Should MONUC fail, the DRC is likely to remain a divided country and devastated well into its future, with grave humanitarian consequences for the Congolese people. This may be the DRC's last chance; flaws and all, MONUC is certainly its best chance for peace.”

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think that the topic is very appropriate at this time. Of course, as you have indicated, the window of opportunity is passing by, and I couldn't agree more with Ambassador Swing, as you quoted, saying that there may not be another opportunity for a peacekeeping operation that we see now.

But let me thank you for calling this important hearing today and of course for your strong leadership on the Africa Subcommittee. Because of your support, we were able to have a debate on the resolution calling genocide in the Sudan something that there were many, many doubters that that would ever come out of the sense of the House. And with your leadership and Mr. Tancredo and Mr. Wolf and others on our side we were able to debate it last night and it will be voted on today. So I appreciate that also.

I know, as you have indicated, you were recently in the DRC, and I am sure that your first hand account of the situation there will help us understand the challenges more thoroughly that we face in that very important country.

I would also like to express my appreciation to you and other Members of the Subcommittee for their continued engagement, as I mentioned, in exposing genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, like Sudan, has been in critical turmoil for years. As you all are aware, May 1997 the Alliance of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo-Zaire, ADFL, marched into Kinshasa and ousted long-time dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. But within a year prospects for a better future for the people of the DRC collapsed, and by August 1998 open conflict erupted between President Kabila and the Congolese. Forces supported by Rwanda and Uganda had this conflict moving on. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe joined in the fighting, and, as you know, we had a mini-continent war going on.

Despite numerous efforts to end the war and to bring stability into DRC, this strategically important country plunged into further chaos and instability. In July 1999, the Lusaka agreement did little to end the chaos but offered a framework for a political settlement. By late 2002, after a series of South Africa United Nations-sponsored talks, foreign troops in the DRC withdrew their forces, although some Ugandan and Zimbabwean troops remain, in part, with the consent of the Kabila government.

In December 2002, the inter-Congolese dialogue achieved a major breakthrough when President Kabila and the parties to the conflict agreed to a transitional government. The global all-inclusive agreement was signed in Pretoria South Africa by the DRC government. The Congolese democratic rallied RCD-Goma, the Movement for the Congolese Liberation, MLC, and representatives of the unarmed political groups in civil society.

The agreement included a 2-year transition headed by President Kabila and four Vice Presidents who are in charge of four commissions. In July 2003, these four Vice Presidents were sworn in, bringing hope to this tormented land and many of them being in Kinshasa for the first time in their lives haven't live in the eastern provinces.

I visited Kinshasa and Eastern DRC last August. I was cautiously optimistic then, perhaps this time around that the DRC will make serious challenges to stability remains. The Kinshasa government still does not have political and security control outside the capital, and that is very essential for elections to happen, especially in the eastern part of the country, as we know which has been controlled, in many instances, by negative forces from outside the border.

In early June 2004, rebel groups led by General Laurent Nkunda and Colonel Jules Mutebutsi attacked and captured the eastern town of Bukavu, killing many civilians and forcing MONUC forces to flee the town. And General Nkunda argues that he attacked the town in order to protect civilians of Tutsi origin who had been targeted by pro-government forces. The rebel forces were forced out of Bukavu, but the incident there demonstrated how fragile the nature of this transitional peace process is and why it is so important that we really kind of zero in on these negative forces and the whole fragile government structure that we have.

As many of you would predict, the Bukavu incident intensified tension between Rwanda and the DRC and seeing that the DRC

might once again plunge itself into a major conflict with their neighbor. In late June, however, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and President Joseph Kabila of DRC met in Nigeria under the auspices of President Obasanjo of Nigeria, and the parties agreed to set up a joint verification committee to ensure border security, hopefully another committee but hopefully it will work.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I must say that I was disturbed to read in the July 2004 United Nations Expert Panel report, which documented violations of the arms embargo imposed on negative forces in the DRC. We cannot continue to have arms embargoes violated.

On a positive note, though, let me express my appreciation to the State Department, specifically the Africa Bureau, for facilitating two rounds of talks among the parties in the Great Lakes region. This is the kind of proactivity engagement that will help confront the serious challenges we are facing in that part of that country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Payne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONALD M. PAYNE, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mr. Chairman let me first thank you for calling this important hearing and for your strong leadership of the Africa Subcommittee. I know you were recently in the DRC and I am sure your first hand account of the situation there will help us understand the challenges we face in that important country. I also like to express my appreciation to you and other members of the subcommittee for their continued engagement in exposing the genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, like Sudan, has been in political turmoil for years. As you are all aware, in May 1997, the Alliance of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) marched into Kinshasa and ousted longtime dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. But within a year, prospects for a better future for the people of Congo collapsed. And by August 1998, open conflict erupted between Kabila and Congolese forces supported by Rwanda and Uganda. Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe joined the fighting in support of Kabila.

Despite numerous efforts to end the war and bring stability to Congo, this strategically important country plunged into further chaos and instability. The July 1999 Lusaka agreement did little to end the chaos, but offered a framework for a political settlement. By late 2002, after a series of South African-U.N.-sponsored talks, foreign troops in DRC withdrew their forces, although some Ugandan and Zimbabwean troops remained, in part with the consent of the Kabila government.

In December 2002, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue achieved a major breakthrough when President Kabila and the parties to the conflict agreed to a transitional government. The Global All-Inclusive Agreement was signed in Pretoria, South Africa, by the DRC government, Congolese Democratic Rally (RCD-Goma), the Movement for the Congolese Liberation (MLC), and representatives of the unarmed political groups. The agreement included a two-year transition headed by President Kabila and four Vice Presidents, who are in charge of four commissions. In July 2003, these four Vice Presidents were sworn in, bringing hope to this tormented land.

I visited Kinshasa and eastern Congo last August. I was cautiously optimistic then that perhaps this time around the Congolese will make it. But serious challenges to stability remain. The Kinshasa government still does not have political and security control outside the capital and especially in eastern part of the country. In early June 2004, rebel groups led by General Laurent Nkunda and Colonel Jules Mutebutsi attacked and captured the eastern town of Bukavu, killing many civilians and forcing MONUC forces to flee the town. General Nkunda argues that he attacked the town in order to protect civilians of Tutsi origin, who had been targeted by pro-government forces. The rebel forces were forced out of Bukavu, but the incident in Bukavu demonstrated the fragile nature of the transitional peace process.

As many of you would predict, the Bukavu incident intensified tensions between Rwanda and Congo and seemed the DRC might once again plunge into a major conflict. In late June, however, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and President Jo-

séph Kabila of Congo met in Nigeria under the auspices of President Obasanjo of Nigeria and the parties agreed to setup a Joint Verification Committee to ensure border security.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I must say I was disturbed to read the July 2004 U.N. Expert Panel Report, which documented violation of the arms embargo imposed on negative forces in Congo. On a positive note, let me express my appreciation to the State Department, specifically the Africa Bureau, for facilitating two-rounds of talks among the parties in the Great Lakes region. This is the kind of pro-active engagement that will help confront the serious challenges we are facing in that part of the country. Thank you Mr. Chairman and look forward to hearing the testimonies of our witnesses.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

As Mr. Payne mentioned, we have a new Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs to welcome to this Subcommittee, Constance Newman, and we want to indicate congratulations, Secretary, on your recent confirmation and your swearing in.

Secretary Newman is not new to us, of course. She has had a distinguished career, most recently serving as the Assistant Administrator for Africa for USAID where she was responsible for many innovative programs on the continent. Ms. Newman worked extensively throughout Africa before that, including serving as a private consultant to South African leaders on affirmative action and diversity and representing the World Bank as a liaison to the South African National Congress and to other organizations.

Secretary Newman, we welcome you, and I look forward to continuing our relationship in your new post as the State Department's top official for Africa. We have many challenges to face together, including the grave challenges in Congo that we will be discussing today. And, Secretary Newman, what we would like to do is just have our witnesses summarize their testimony and sort of speak off the cuff, because we have read the written statements, and we again welcome you here.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CONSTANCE BERRY NEWMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. NEWMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Payne. I would like to thank you for calling this hearing. I think that we all recognize the importance of DRC and understand how fragile the country has been since 1996. I think that what has happened now is a feeling that some parts of the country are relatively tranquil, but the other parts, particularly in the east, give us all concern.

Now, we do recognize that rebuilding a country that has been steeped in the type of conflict that has been the case there for such a long period of time is a daunting task. You have already mentioned the peace agreements, and they are outlined again in my testimony, and I think it is very important that people pay attention to those, because as far as we are concerned, they are the basis for any action that the international community should be taking at this time. And any communication and leaning on the participants needs to be in the context of those agreements.

And it is perfectly clear from those agreements that it is intended that troops be withdrawn, that there be no support of rebels or insurgency and that there be support for a transitional government moving to an election.

A moment about the United States and the international role in all of this. As you know, the signatories to the final act agreed to establish a support committee, and the United States, through our Ambassador to the DRC, has played a leadership role in that committee. We have provided roughly over \$100 million in annual assistance to the DRC, some which is directed toward democracy and human rights.

We continue to support MONUC. Its mandate, as you have stated, has modified over time to include assistance to the transitional government. Still, the situation remains fluid, the possibility of disaster ever-present. The recent violence in Bukavu is illustrative of the ongoing problems faced by the people of the DRC. This force of MONUC is only 10,000 peacekeepers; 1,000 of them went into that area. That indicates to us that this all needs to be reviewed, and I will mention that just as I close.

Despite some progress in relations between Rwanda and the DRC government, mistrust still persists, and we recognize that it goes in both directions. It is our view, however, that it is very important that we continue to work with the DRC, with Rwanda and the other regional leaders to build a climate of trust in the Great Lakes region. And in addition to that, though, it can't be with allowing impunity of those who are violating the agreements.

One other point that I know we are in agreement about, and that is the importance of the Congo's vast rainforest, and it is important, in large part, because of the potential for recognizing the economic growth of the area. But it is also important that we pay attention to it because in the near-term it has been used as unauthorized sanctuary for the rebels.

We do, as a nation, have a great interest in seeing a stable and prosperous DRC, and that is because of our interest, generally, in stability around the world. Yes, we mentioned in the statement our interest in the need for recognizing a natural wealth but it is mainly the wealth of the people and the need for stability that drives, I think, our participation here.

I will end, because I know you have questions, with just a few statements about our present and future efforts. Congressman Payne did mention our inviting the ministers of Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC here, and I might say to you that this followed on tough discussions that the African leaders had with these leaders in Addis at the African Union Summit.

And as a personal note, prior to our meeting here in Washington, I spoke to the leaders in Addis to be certain of their comfort level that the United States was playing the role that we intended to play, and each indicated to me that they felt having their foreign ministers and their defense ministers meeting together here in Washington furthered their own goal of bringing about greater ability for them to build trust and resolve the conflict.

Congressman Payne mentioned President Obasanjo. He was another person that I spoke with prior to our meeting here, and he again reinforced that the United States can help in resolving the conflict there so long as we continue to communicate with him and with the AU about the direction in which we are moving.

I will just end by saying I did meet with the Secretary General's Special Representative, Ambassador Swing, when he was here. He

is still here, I think, and I know he is been speaking with you, and he is provided, not in depth, but I think that will come, some of his perspective on MONUC's role and its needs. We look forward to the full report to help guide us in determining what to recommend in the United Nations Security Council when MONUC's mandate expires.

We are profoundly concerned about the Congo and its people. However, I believe there is hope that with effort and patience and wisdom we can make a difference there. The situation remains serious and we can't pretend that it doesn't, but the essential prerequisites for a peaceful solution are in place, and I know that with your continued support, your pushing of us also, that will make a difference in ensuring that we can improve the lives of the people in that region. So with that, I will end my testimony.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Newman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CONSTANCE BERRY NEWMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify on the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). And thank you Mr. Chairman for your recent trip to Kinshasa. The situation in the DRC has been fragile since the country tumbled into political chaos in 1996. In what has been deemed Africa's first world war, at least five neighboring countries sent their military forces to the Congo in 1998. The nearly five year conflict there resulted in at least three and a half million civilian deaths—the highest death toll of any conflict since 1945—and virtual destruction of the country's economic infrastructure. The Congo River, the symbol of national unity and a key economic link in the country, was closed to commercial traffic for five years. A number of armies and semi-organized groups of bandits, some of them enjoying foreign support, have emerged from the strife. While some parts of the country are now relatively tranquil, other areas, particularly in the east, remain strife-torn.

Rebuilding a country that has been steeped in conflict for such a protracted period is a daunting task indeed. When Belgium granted independence in 1960, by one account there were only 17 university graduates in the entire country. Most people had only a fourth grade education, if that. It is not surprising that civil strife afflicted the DRC from the time of its inception. There are literally hundreds of ethnic groups inhabiting the Congo's vast territory. They speak some 300 languages. Unifying them is no simple task. As is often the case in Africa, ethnic groups have been divided by national boundaries imposed by the colonizers. This has served to exacerbate the international border conflicts from which the DRC suffers today.

THE PEACE AGREEMENTS

Over the past five years, the regional protagonists, assisted by strong regional and international mediation efforts, signed four major agreements designed to bring peace in the DRC. The Lusaka Agreement of 1999 was the first comprehensive agreement aimed at ending the wars in the Congo. It was signed by all of the belligerent parties, including both recognized governments and rebel groups. It called for a cease-fire, inter-Congolese political negotiations, disarming militias and armed groups, including the Rwandan Hutu rebels present in the Congo, and the normalization of the security situation along common borders.

In July 2002, in Pretoria, the DRC and Rwanda signed the watershed Pretoria Agreement, whereby Rwanda agreed to withdraw its troops from the DRC, the Congo agreed to assist in dismantling the Rwandan Hutu rebels in its territory, and the two countries agreed to work together to facilitate repatriation of Rwandans in the Congo and to establish a mechanism for the normalization of the security situation along their common border.

Then, in September 2002, in Luanda, Angola, the DRC and Uganda signed an agreement calling for the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the Congo and the establishment of a pacification committee for Ituri Province of the DRC. Both sides agreed to refrain from military support for armed groups on the other's territory,

and to cooperate in defense and security to include the establishment of a border security mechanism.

Lastly, the Final Act of the inter-Congolese political negotiations was signed in April 2003 in Sun City, South Africa. This agreement was the culmination of the Congolese political negotiations that commenced in October 2001. The Final Act comprises the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the DRC, signed in December 2002 in Pretoria, the Transitional Constitution, the memorandum on military and security issues of March 2003, and the 36 resolutions adopted by the inter-Congolese dialogue in April 2002. The Accord called for a President supported by four vice-presidents.

In effect, a framework for peace is in place in the form of these agreements, and this framework has been strongly supported by the international community. At the request of the signatories to the Final Act, the international community agreed to establish a support committee to assist in encouraging formation of a transitional government and the extension of state authority throughout the DRC, culminating in the holding of national elections in 2005. Our Ambassador in the DRC plays a leadership role on this committee, and we remain committed to re-establishment of the Congolese government throughout the entire territory of the DRC, democratic elections, the resumption of relief and development work. What is required now is consistent hard work to see through the re-establishment of government throughout the entire territory of the DRC, democratic elections, the resumption of relief and development work, and the completion of other critical tasks such as the disarmament and demobilization of armed groups that pose a threat to the Congo and its neighbors.

U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE TRANSITIONAL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Over the course of the past decade of conflict, the United States has worked closely with the United Nations, our friends and allies in the region and the Congolese people to try to bring peace and stability to this potentially very rich land. We have embarked on this path because of the critical importance to Central Africa of peace in the Congo—it is by far the region's largest country, bordering nine other countries in the heart of the continent. We currently provide roughly \$100 million in annual assistance to the DRC, of which some is directed towards programs supporting democracy and human rights.

The United Nations, with our support, has established a UN peacekeeping force, the UN Mission for the Congo (MONUC). MONUC was originally designed to monitor the cease-fire among signatories to the Lusaka Agreement and to assist in the disarmament and demobilization of Rwandan Hutu rebels in the DRC. Its mandate, over time, has been modified to meet changing circumstances. The mandate has been expanded to include assisting the DRC's transitional national government in the extension of state authority throughout the country, some disarmament and demobilization assistance for Congolese armed groups, civilian police training and in elections preparation. MONUC is one of the largest UN peacekeeping operations in existence, but it is not a large force when one considers that the DRC is equal in size to the United States east of the Mississippi. MONUC's maximum authorized size is 10,800 troops, essentially the same number of troops it has on the ground now.

Despite these considerable challenges, the transitional national government has had some success. The fact that much of the country has been peaceful for the past year-and-a-half denotes the progress that has been made compared to the pre-Lusaka period when a number of foreign armies from neighboring states were fighting in the DRC. Factions that were fighting one-another just two years ago are now participating in the same government and are talking to one another instead of killing. The national parliament, with over 600 members, includes virtually every significant interest group.

CONTINUING PROBLEMS

Still, the situation remains fluid and the possibility of disaster ever present. The recent violence in the eastern city of Bukavu, near the Rwandan border, is illustrative of the ongoing problems faced by the people of the DRC. A renegade Congolese Lieutenant Colonel Jule Mutebusi took over the city on May 26 with a force of several hundred men. Another rebel, General Nkunda, with a force of several thousand, joined him. MONUC, with a force of only one thousand men, chose not to play an aggressive role in attempting to repel Nkunda's and Mutebusi's militias. Following strong international pressure, Mutebusi and Nkunda withdrew their forces from Bukavu, and the DRC transitional government re-entered Bukavu on June 25. Mutebusi and a number of his forces have been disarmed and are now de-

tained in Rwanda; Nkunda remains in the DRC some 100 miles north of Bukavu, where he is allegedly seeking new recruits. Added to the general instability in eastern Congo is the presence of Mai-Mai and Rwandan Hutu rebels.

Despite some progress in relations between Rwanda and the DRC governments, mistrust still persists. When the DRC army retook Bukavu, Rwanda accused it of massing troops on the border in preparation for an invasion. The Congolese are convinced that Rwanda supported Mutebusi and Nkunda, and continue to provide military assistance to dissident groups. We continue to work with the DRC, Rwanda, and other regional leaders to build a climate of trust in the Great Lakes region. For without such trust the civilian population in the Congo and elsewhere in the region will surely suffer. Reports from eastern Congo indicate that during their occupation of Bukavu these rebels raped and pillaged at will; there are some reports indicating that elements within the national army behaved as badly as the rebels when the city was retaken. It is our hope and determination that the perpetrators of these crimes be held responsible for their actions.

The fighting in the east provoked the flight of over 30,000 people to sanctuary in Burundi and Rwanda. The occupation of Bukavu caused a break in humanitarian efforts in eastern Congo. Many non-Congolese relief workers fled the fighting, although most Congolese workers remained and minimal services continued. With the national army now in control of Bukavu, most relief workers have returned and services have been resumed.

The Congo's vast rain forests have also provided unauthorized sanctuary for rebels fighting against the Ugandan government. The Ugandans moved troops into the DRC during the 1996 and 1999 wars, and they are impatient with the DRC government for not having brought the northeastern part of the country under control (i.e. to control the Ugandan rebels). In fact we have seen reports that Uganda provides arms to militias in the region.

I'm sure you agree with me Mr. Chairman when I say the United States has real interests in seeing a stable and prospering DRC. As I've noted, stability in the DRC is key to regional stability, as it borders nine other countries. Conflict there cannot help but spill over to neighboring countries, impacting their political and economic development as well.

The presence of significant deposits of uranium has the potential to make the DRC a point of interest for those who would develop nuclear capabilities illicitly. Its lack of internal controls and vast forests make it a place where armed groups can hide.

The structure of the transitional national government is unwieldy. In order to bring in all of the warring factions, an agreement was reached to allow for four vice-presidents. Two of the vice-presidents have private armies, and it is difficult to get agreement on many key issues.

A history of assassinations keeps all senior government officers on guard. President Kabila's father was assassinated in 2001. In April and June of this year there were two unsuccessful coup attempts in Kinshasa by dissident military officers. Although no one was killed in either attempt and the government remains in place; they nonetheless added to an aura of instability. The coup attempts have also forced MONUC to move more troops to the capital to protect senior government officials, leaving fewer men available in the provinces.

We are also concerned about the long-term ecological effects of the strife in the DRC. The Virunga National Park is the world's largest habitat of mountain gorilla, an endangered species. Recent refugee movements brought hundreds of families into the Park where they burned down forest to allow their cattle to graze. Following our protests, this movement of people seems to have stopped; but great damage was done. Through the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, a project you have supported Mr. Chairman, we are working to preserve the ecology of the huge watershed of this major river. But until there is effective government control of the entire country, illegal foresting and mining will continue to take a toll.

U.S AND INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Instability in such a large country is a threat to the Central African region, and to the entire world. The country is amazingly wealthy in terms of natural resources. There are huge deposits of copper, cobalt, coltan and industrial diamonds. There are also significant deposits of gold, oil and uranium. The DRC's hydroelectric potential may be the world's greatest and there is considerable agricultural wealth. There is enormous potential for foreign, including American, investment. However, despite the country's natural wealth, the DRC's annual per capita income is \$99, one of the world's lowest. Much of the country's wealth is being exploited by unscrupulous business people who often export diamonds and other minerals via neighboring

countries that profit from their middleman role. We have worked closely with states in the neighborhood to improve conditions in the Congo.

Last week the Foreign Ministers of the DRC and Rwanda and the Defense Minister of Uganda met with us in Washington in the second of what we hope will be monthly meetings to resolve their differences peacefully with the United States as a neutral facilitator. All three nations have reason to be concerned about events in eastern Congo. Rwanda has a well-justified concern regarding the presence in eastern Congo of armed Rwandan Hutu rebels, some of whom participated in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Rebellious movements from Uganda also find refuge in the DRC's forests from which they periodically launch raids on Uganda. The Congolese, in turn, hope that their central government in Kinshasa can re-establish security and calm in the eastern part of the country, that they can establish a secure frontier, and that they can resume the work of providing for their population. These goals are threatened by the presence of armed groups in the east of the country.

To address these concerns, we invited ministers of the Congolese, Rwandan and Ugandan governments to Washington in May. My Deputy, Donald Yamamoto, led a delegation to Kinshasa and Kigali last month, and as I mentioned, we hosted the three ministers again last week in Washington. We have issued a communiqué regarding the shared commitments of these three countries and expect to meet again in August to pursue the shared objectives that have been agreed to. Nigerian President Obasanjo recently hosted the Presidents of Rwanda and the DRC in Abuja for meetings that contributed to a commitment to find ways to build confidence between the Rwandan and DRC governments. Obasanjo appealed to the leaders to cease hostilities and focus their attention on full implementation of the 2002 Pretoria Agreement. The Presidents of the DRC and Rwanda agreed to re-dedicate themselves to the Pretoria agreement and are working with MONUC to establish a Joint Verification Mechanism which will support efforts to control the border and the security situation in eastern Congo.

NEXT STEPS

We will continue to offer our facilitation to the ministers of DRC, Rwanda and Uganda to address the issues. We will continue to support the DRC with humanitarian and development assistance, particularly focused on the plight of the people in the east, development of democratic institutions, and improving health care and addressing food security and economic growth issues.

Most immediately, we are currently looking at means of ensuring that MONUC, the key international organization in the DRC, plays as constructive a role as possible. The Secretary General's Special Representative, Ambassador William Swing, has been in Washington this week for detailed discussions of the situation in the Congo. He is providing his perspective on MONUC's role and its needs, as we consider what to recommend in the U.N. Security Council when MONUC's mandate is considered following an expected three-month technical rollover at the end of July and issuance of a report by the Secretary General in late August. I understand he met with some of you and your staff members.

Mr. Chairman, though we are profoundly concerned about Congo and its people, I believe that there is hope that with effort, patience, and wisdom, we can make a difference there. As I said at the outset of my testimony, the situation in the DRC remains very serious, but the essential prerequisites for a peaceful solution are in place. We hope you will continue your strong support for the process.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Secretary Newman. In your statement, you testify regarding last month's attack on Bukavu and you say:

“A renegade lieutenant colonel, Jules Mutebusi, perhaps with Rwandan backing, took over the city on May 26 with a force of several hundred men.”

On Tuesday, a United Nations Panel of Experts released a report stating that the Rwandan government backed this force. Is the United Nations report authoritative, in your view?

And I will share with you, I have seen first hand the engagement of Rwandans on the ground in Kinshasa and in the DRC. In 1997, less than 24 hours after the government fell, I was in neighboring Angola, so we flew into the airport, and my first experience there was in having armed soldiers, who turned out to be Rwandan

Tutsis with machine guns, climb into the jeeps and they went with us when we were meeting with the ministers and seeking to meet, we subsequently met with Laurent Kabila at the time. So I knew the role they played then all the way in Kinshasa.

And so I wanted to know, is the United Nations report authoritative when they say the Rwandan government backed this force.

Ms. NEWMAN. Mr. Chairman, I don't know for certain the details. I know this: That Rwanda knows what commitments it has made, and Rwanda knows what it has and has not done. I think that it is important—and this may be a tactic that you may not agree with—but I think it is important for those of us who are trying to bring them together to make clear what is expected of all of them.

Mr. ROYCE. I understand that, Secretary Newman, but at this point, we need Rwanda to understand that at this juncture they need to be part of the solution again—

Ms. NEWMAN. I agree.

Mr. ROYCE [continuing]. Not part of the problem. And when the DRC army took Bukavu back, Rwanda accused it of massing troops on the border in preparation for an invasion. Is this Rwandan charge of DRC's aggressive intentions remotely possible, given the Rwandan supremacy in terms of military equipment and personnel and training?

Ms. NEWMAN. I mean, I am probably about to say something that is not diplomatic, but it is entirely possible that each and every one of the actors here can behave badly, and I do include Rwanda. But I, again, am saying to you in bringing together the ministers and all, it is my hope that we can keep the door open to all of them.

We have had conversations with Rwanda, with the DRC, with Uganda about the charges that have been made against each and every one of them and what is expected of them based on their own agreements. But I don't know if it is wise of me and whether I personally have enough documentation to say that they in particular behaved in a certain way on a certain date.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, then let me just cite the United Nations report of its Panel of Experts that cites Uganda and Rwanda for arming and supporting factions in Congo, and let me ask, did the Administration raise this issue when the Uganda minister of defense and the Rwandan foreign minister and the DRC foreign minister met last week with the State Department.

Ms. NEWMAN. Yes. And I attended part of it, and I can have those who attended the entire meeting brief you. But during those meetings, there was an honest discussion, not just on the part of the United States but the other participants there, charging one another of what it is they believe they have done in violation of the agreements so that the communique that came from that meeting came after a discussion by the various participants of their disagreement with and their charges with regard to the other participants. But I will be more than happy to give more of a transcript if that is what you care for.

Mr. ROYCE. That would be helpful, and I want to reestablish the point that we have a plan on the drawing boards for joint border patrols on the DRC with Rwanda and DRC forces. I think that if Rwanda is serious, they will subscribe to this plan, and we will begin to solve this problem, and I think that really isn't that long.

This is something that can be addressed and solved, and if we want to end the pillaging of natural resources and if we want to create some sense of calm on that border, this is the way to do it.

And my hope is that Rwanda will take that action and the DRC will take that action soon, because I am mindful that in 2002 the United States threatened Rwanda with withholding support for its IMF loan unless it withdrew its troops in the DRC, which it did soon after. That is a lever that I assume the United States would use again on Rwanda if we do not get compliance, and let me ask you that question.

Ms. NEWMAN. I can't speak yet for the government, but I certainly personally would support it if that were clear and if it were clear that it would be necessary in order to bring about the kind of results that I think we all want.

Mr. ROYCE. I appreciate that. Now, the last question I want to ask you goes to the nonchalance on the part of the Congolese government with respect to the uranium mining that is occurring in terms of allowing inspectors, United Nations inspectors, to go in and seal off and cement down that mine. The presence of significant deposits of uranium, as you say in your report and your testimony, has the potential to make the DRC a point of interest for those who would develop nuclear capabilities illicitly. As I said in my statement, United Nations investigators this week warned that massive digging at this mine threatens to put nuclear ore into terrorist hands.

So the point I want to make is with regard to the DRC government we would like to see support for the international community going in and cementing down this mine and solving a problem before it becomes something that we can't solve.

Ms. NEWMAN. Mr. Chairman, I agree with that. What I need to do also is to share with you a report of some experts that went into that area and who found no evidence that the miners were seeking or mining uranium.

Mr. ROYCE. I know that argument is made.

Ms. NEWMAN. Okay.

Mr. ROYCE. But this is the mine that produced the ore that was used in Nagasaki.

Ms. NEWMAN. Right, for the Manhattan project.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes, the Manhattan project. And, frankly, the amount of activity that is going on in that mine where some 15,000 miners work that area primarily for cobalt, probably for other minerals, but they have the ability to extract this ore as well.

And I would just share with you, I have had this discussion with Laurent Kabila years ago about this particular site and securing this site and a problem we were having at that time with the fact that he had a contract with the North Koreans for security purposes that we were concerned where they might have an interest in this particular material. And given the fact that the ore is there and given the amount of activity that occurs there and given the fact that there is no organized effort, there isn't a business in charge of this, this is clandestine operations that go on there, so we have got various interpretations of what could or could not be going on, but the fact is that because the DRC government is not open to allowing access, it remains something of a mystery.

So I am just saying it should be a priority dropping cement down that shaft and ending the possibility for anybody to access it, and to do that we have got to get the DRC compliance, so I wanted to urge that.

Ms. NEWMAN. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much, Secretary Newman, and we will go to Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I think that we really have to try to ensure that the border is secure, and I agree, we have heard reports back and forth about Rwandan forces being in Uganda. And if they indeed are, and reports seem to indicate that they may still have some influence, I think that certainly needs to end.

But when I went to eastern Congo last year, I questioned some of the United Nations observers to ask them how were you sure that these people they saw were Rwandan military people or Rwandan military officials maybe out of uniform, and after some questioning it was pretty clear that it is very difficult to identify very specifically and assured who is a Rwandan and who is a eastern Congolese who may be the Banyamulenge people who have been there for the last 100 years; they really look alike. And you have got to be kind of sharp to be able to delineate who is whom. And so I know that that has been a question about sitings and interpretation of exactly who is really who.

I just have a question about the elections. Do you see much activity going on in the central government regarding the possibility of elections and things that have to be done in order to be ready for an election?

Ms. NEWMAN. I would put on my old hat and say that USAID has been funding activities in order to prepare for the elections. However, I am not comfortable, and some of it has to do with the conflict that makes it more difficult to really prepare for elections, but I am not comfortable that given the time table—unless there is a real stepping up of activity, they are going to be ready.

And one thing that concerns me, not just here but in other parts of Africa where elections are to come up, is that there may be factions that don't want the election and therefore don't assist in the preparation. I don't think we can give excuses to anybody who has agreed to the elections to delay them. And we need to give more technical assistance and resources.

So the answer is I don't think enough is being done.

Mr. PAYNE. And what about the question of debt relief that has been questioned—

Ms. NEWMAN. Question of what, I am sorry?

Mr. PAYNE. Debt relief. When I met with President Kabila on his last trip here, he was very anxious to talk about the possibility of debt relief for the Congo, DRC. Do you know whether Treasury or anyone in State or the Administration is looking at that?

Ms. NEWMAN. I know the subject has come up, and I know it is a tough subject every time it comes up, and I know that there needs to be assurances that where there is debt relief that the money is applied to making a difference in terms of the lives of the people. And I am not sure that comfort level is there at this time, but I will get back to you. I don't know, they may be talking about it in Treasury. I have to get back to you.

Mr. PAYNE. Okay. I think that it is something that I would really like to see this fledgling government have, have some assurances or even have some debt support. There is no way they can pay the debt that they owe. Of course, we know it came from the Mobutu regime. They have to assume it, it is unfair, and we ought to look at ways not only for bilateral debt but for the multinationals.

Let me just get back to this question about Rwandan forces in Uganda, and I know this is something that has come about, and I know the Chairman has some very strong positions on it, but I too wonder about the 8,000 to 12,000 Hutus with the FDLR that are allegedly still in the Congo. President Kabila continues to say that there are still Interahamwe, Ex-FAR, and it is verified that they are there.

What about their potential for cross-border? I mean it is a two-way street, it is a two-way border, and it is almost like what comes first, the chicken or the egg. Kabila says:

“We will turn them all over and then we won’t have to worry.”

The government of Congo says:

“They are all around. It is difficult to get them.”

And so as long as this—as you mentioned, there are enough bad guys to go around, and as long as this 10,000 to 15,000 troops who left Rwanda who were the genocidiaries and the Interahamwe, et cetera, are in the Congo, there is going to be a problem. And it is not simplistic just to say, “Rwanda, you stay over there,” if they are concerned that there will be some cross-border things. What is your take on that?

Ms. NEWMAN. You know, the Ex-FAR and Interahamwe is a problem in and of itself. The agreement in Pretoria was that they would begin to repatriate those troops. What has to happen, and this can be separate and apart from the Rwandan problem, there are people there who need alternative ways of making a living or they are continuing to stir up trouble. And right now it is my understanding that there is not enough being done to address that problem. President Kagame says that all the time. But that should be no excuse—that is no excuse—for violating the border. It is a separate problem that has to be dealt with separately.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, my time is about up, but I think that we really have to somehow get these again to talk about the rumors that go on, the rumors that the DRC is supplying arms to the Mai-Mai and the fact that Kabila says that he doesn’t have troops there in the DRC when sometimes we know that they come across the border. And so, like I say, we need to really come up with some solutions.

And, finally, about the uranium mines and other things, I think that what we should try to do—if I were the country of the Congo, I would not want a valuable resource to be cemented over. I think that what we ought to try to do is to have some kind of organization, whether it is the International Atomic Energy people or if it is some United Nations, some responsible organization to go and monitor the area to try to see if there can then be some responsible people that are going to be responsible for the resources. Because the answer to a country that may have a resource that is valuable, it needs to be contained.

I don't want uranium to be in the hands of terrorists, that is for sure, however, it is kind of simplistic to—diamonds are used some places for terrorists, and we don't say, "Well, just stop the diamonds totally." I mean, in other words, I know the Chairman is not saying that, but there has to be a way to let a country be able to benefit from its natural resources but it has to be done—and I agree wholeheartedly, there has to be some organized, some United Nations, some international atomic energy. It can't just be, as he said—and this was 15,000 people digging around a place, coming up with all kinds of resources. The government has to get control over its resources so that it can then go to benefit the people in that country who are suffering from poverty and malnutrition and AIDS deaths and all the rest. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Now we will go to the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Tancredo—Colorado, I am sorry.

Mr. TANCREDO. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one quick question. We have been talking about the kinds of consequences that we would like to see if in fact Rwanda does not respond to our requests, and the Chairman mentioned earlier on about interrupting their ability to access economic aid. But on the 13th of July, General Charles Wald, the Deputy Commander for the European Command, signed an agreement with the Rwandan government normalizing a military-to-military relationship, and that was just a month after Rwanda was widely reported to be supporting Congolese rebels who captured Bukavu.

Now, at the signing, General Wald lauded the Rwandan government for exercising restraint, and a week later a United Nations Panel of Experts issued a report confirming the allegation that Rwanda had troops in the DRC on a semi-permanent basis, even against its own commitments to the contrary.

So the question, of course, is what are the messages that we are sending here, and how can they rely upon our commitment to a particular course of action that is designed to extricate them from the DRC?

Ms. NEWMAN. First of all, I am not going to defend General Wald. You have probably met him. He doesn't need anybody defending him. But that agreement was played up, frankly, much more than it really is. That agreement is primarily one that is used in I think over 77 countries, and it is an agreement to allow for in-kind materials to be substituted for supplies and training. So it made sense that there was a vehicle to use to move goods and services. That wasn't your point, but I wanted to make that point.

Your point was are we sending mixed messages, and I would hope not, and I would think that the message that is being given by the African Union and by us in calling together the stakeholders here, the message is that it is everybody's intent and even mandate, the international community's mandate that the parties live up to the agreement. And so any message that does not support that is not a message that the United States intends to give. So I wasn't there, but I do know that that particular agreement is not really as military-to-military as that sounds, but it was an acquisition agreement.

Mr. TANCREDO. That is, of course, good to hear in terms of exactly the nature of the agreement, but beyond it, it still is disconcerting that the Europeans have not entered into this discussion, I think, to the extent we would hope. Or do you think they have?

Ms. NEWMAN. Well, when we were all in Addis at the African Union Summit, and I met many of the European colleagues there, there was very strong talk about all of the parties complying with the agreement. And there was strong talk at separate meetings that the African Union Summit leaders had with the three Presidents—well, President Kabila wasn't there but his foreign minister was. So that I don't see how they could be confused that people are not noting their behavior, that people are not expressing, will not express strong views against their violation of the agreements. I think they understand that.

But if there is any confusion, what I would like to do is share the communique that came out of the meeting that we had with the foreign ministers and the defense ministers, which highlighted a recognition on their part that they are to disarm the armed groups, that they are to enhance the efforts to prevent the use of their territories to arm and support negative forces. The conversations that we are having with the leaders seem each time to strengthen, from my point of view, the point that bad behavior is not going to be rewarded by the international community.

Mr. TANCREDO. Did anybody take notice of—any European take notice of what Wald said when he was praising the—

Ms. NEWMAN. I don't know.

Mr. TANCREDO. Not the fact that they signed but what he said at the signing.

Ms. NEWMAN. I haven't had any conversation with anybody since then, but I am going to have a meeting with General Wald this afternoon and I will ask him if he is gotten any—

Mr. TANCREDO. Yes. Well, it was bad timing, to say the least.

Mr. ROYCE. Share with him our concern.

Ms. NEWMAN. I will.

Mr. ROYCE. I meant to call him about it.

Ms. NEWMAN. Okay. But I will. I will see him this afternoon.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have nothing else.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Tancredo.

We will go to Mr. Flake from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. No questions right now.

Mr. ROYCE. All right.

Mr. MEEKS?

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I apologize for being late and missing some of the testimony, so I hope I am not repeating something that you may have already discussed. Clearly, we know this is a very important hearing, and seeing a Democratic Republic of Congo become a secure nation with a strong and stable economy is tremendously important, I believe, particularly to the entire continent of Africa.

That being said, let me just ask these quick questions. If there were elections to be held in 2005, I believe there is still a lot that

needs to be done, especially on the security front. And I am told from reading that there has been some progress made. The transitional constitution and a transitional government and a transitional parliament, an electoral commission all have been created. Independent media and the growing participation of civil society with the help of entities such as the NED are also taking place.

However, without the basic security and a firm commitment to support the creation of transparent economic structures and entities, the efforts could be wasted.

And so my first question is with the transitional government on schedule for holding elections in 2005 and given that the country remains divided, essential legislation hasn't been passed, and there are multiple armed forces operating throughout the country, can we have these elections, fruitful elections, in 2005, your estimation?

Ms. NEWMAN. Well, my experience in other places leads me to say the following: First of all, a government that is distracted with conflict is not doing a very good job of planning for elections. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that if there is a lack of security in the country and there are parts of the country that are not safe, it is going to be very difficult to run an election there.

The third is that the Congo is huge, as everybody knows, and in the discussions that I have had with people about having enough resources there in order to cover the election, has not led to enough resources. I mean I have been talking to Europeans and others about the cost of preparing for the election, and the money isn't there yet.

I think that what will happen, though, is a step up on the part of the international community and hopefully the government itself, recognizing it really doesn't have a lot of time and there are many steps that they have to go through to get to the election, and at this pace, it will be very difficult.

Mr. MEEKS. I understand this, but do you think that there needs to be additional troops? There is not 1 single army now, and I think, what is it, 10,800 troops that are there currently. Is that the right number? Should there be more? Can we help, can we strengthen MONUC?

Ms. NEWMAN. You know, there will be the reports coming from MONUC. I have had several conversations with the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative. He has, and I am sure you know this, implied that one of the concerns they have is level of troops and the mandate. But this is something the United States will have to look into after receiving his report to see whether we agree. And to answer that question whether we agree, we also have to answer the question are we prepared to come up with the necessary resources if there is an increase. That is not easily come by.

Mr. MEEKS. Last question would be, just simply, again, I am just trying to—do you see cooperation in the region? I mean all of the time the problem has been with reference to Uganda, Rwanda and people saying they are crossing the border, et cetera. Where do you see those governments, are they going to be cooperative still or will that be a continuing problem?

Ms. NEWMAN. Well, you know, countries that have been in conflict for long periods of time don't become buddies overnight. And

I think that everybody's trying to ensure that their representatives are speaking in the context of the agreement. These four agreements that are outlined were not come by easily, and then implementation is difficult. There is limited trust as between the parties, and that makes it all the more difficult.

And then I don't know who is to say that the parties themselves, the leadership of the countries involved have control over all of the people within their countries; they don't. So this, I think, the reason we are all continuing to talk about this. It is very complicated, and we are nowhere near where we need to be to have a whole Democratic Republic of the Congo with people being safe and the borders being secure. We are not there.

Mr. MEEKS. Last question, Mr. Chairman, is about the underground economy. I am told that there is this huge underground economy for some of the natural resources there, and foreign businesses, in the mining areas in particular, have monopolies, et cetera, that are going on. What do you see about this underground economy, and is there anything that can or will be done in that regards to help bring this government together?

Ms. NEWMAN. Well, an underground economy can exist in an environment of a weak government, and the government, though it is trying to become strong, is not there. And, therefore, there are the loopholes and there is the rule of law and the failure of the policing entity to get on to of the underground economy. But I think everybody understands that for the people to benefit from the wealth of the nation, they have to get on top of this, but this isn't the only place that this is a problem.

Mr. MEEKS. But can we do something with reference to some of the U.S. companies that may be involved?

Ms. NEWMAN. We should. I don't know which ones. I don't know which ones. I know what is rumored, but I don't know which ones. I think we should look into that.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. I would just make the point that I had an opportunity to talk to Ambassador Swing, the Special Representative of the Secretary General, while I was in Kinshasa a couple of weeks ago, and he said that the June deadline is the only thing driving democracy forward, the only thing putting pressure on the Congolese government to produce legislation that was required to conduct elections and that, in his view, this was essential to establishing a legitimate national government. Ambassador Aubrey Hooks, on the ground, agreed with that assessment when I talked with him about it.

And so I think it is very important that we keep the pressure on this government to end its fractious in-fighting and to pass this legislation and to move forward with democracy, because I think the Congolese people need to feel that they have a legitimate national government. And even if there is one province, because of unrest, not everybody gets to the polls, it is absolutely essential that we not keep putting off the process.

I remember having this conversation with Laurent Kabila when I first met with him. I remember all the excuses about elections and they never came. And if we want order to come and stability to come to Congo, people have to have the feeling that it is a legiti-

mate state. And I don't think we can make excuses for their putting off the process. That is my view.

I also just wanted to again thank you for your testimony today. I think we have learned a great deal, and I appreciate very much your commitment to this conflict in Congo, and I think the continent has many challenges, and we look forward to working with you, Secretary Newman, to confront these challenges in the years ahead. Thank you so much.

Before proceeding, this is the Subcommittee's last hearing before the fall, so I would like to recognize the outstanding work of the Subcommittee's three interns, and I would like to ask them to stand at this time. Hunter Strupp, if you would stand; Kathryn Bohannon, Kathryn, please; Mark Naylor, if you would stand. We very much appreciate all of your good work here. Thank you.

I would also like to, if there is no objection, submit testimony for the record by En Avant Congo, which is a Washington-based NGO that is committed to benefiting suffering Congolese and committed to improving political conditions in the DRC. And so, without objection, we will include that in the record.

As we go to our second panel, I am going to ask Gareth Evans and Learned Dees to come forward. Gareth Evans has been the President of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group since January 2000. Prior to his involvement with ICG, Mr. Evans spent 21 years in Australian politics, 8 of which as foreign minister, becoming his country's longest-serving foreign minister. Mr. Evans has written and edited 8 books, including, *Cooperating for Peace*, and has published over 80 journal articles. I should say that over the last few years I have come to very much appreciate ICG's work, which is a tribute to your leadership, Mr. Evans.

We also have Mr. Learned Dees. He is the senior program officer for Africa at the National Endowment for Democracy. Mr. Dees is responsible for program development, assessment and monitoring of projects supporting non-governmental organizations. Prior to his work with NED, with the National Endowment for Democracy, he was a journalist in Africa covering political events in Congo throughout the early 1990s.

And both you gentlemen, frankly, are uniquely qualified to shed light on developments in the Congo, so we appreciate your testifying here today and ask you to summarize and we will hold you 5 minutes, and we appreciate your written copy.

We will begin, Mr. Evans. We need you to push that red button.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARETH EVANS, PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP (FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA)

Mr. EVANS. Thank you very much, Chairman Royce and Ranking Member, Congressman Payne, for inviting me to testify on behalf of the International Crisis Group on the currently extremely fragile situation in the DRC.

I might say that, though I did spend 21 years in Australian politics on both sides of this particular kind of table, this is my first experience of testifying here in the United States, and I particularly appreciate the opportunity to do so on such a vital issue.

The timing of the hearing is particularly appropriate, coming 2 weeks, as it does, before the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Congo (MONUC) is due for review in the Security Council.

It is now a year since the principal Congolese opponents signed agreements, giving us all hope that the appalling violence and misery and misgovernment that has characterized so many of the Congo's 44 years of independence was at last behind us. But as Chairman Royce said in his opening statement, a year later, President Kabila's government of transition is barely intact, little has been done to draw up a new constitution, even less to prepare for the elections scheduled for next year, and minimal progress has been made in creating a new national army.

As we all know, the country is the size of the U.S. east of the Mississippi, and the government simply has not been able to extend its authority throughout it. And on top of all these general concerns, we now have the specific alarm bells rung about the whole future of the transition by the recent fighting for control of Bukavu, which MONUC proved powerless to prevent or control.

There are three immediate areas of policy concern that are crucial to the success of the political transition in the Congo. There is security, there are regional relations and there is political capacity, and my written testimony addresses each of those, in turn. But the bottom line, I would suggest, is whether the U.S. and other governments, with all their other current priorities and distractions, have the will to give sufficient support, both to MONUC and to the equally important political side of the transition.

I would also suggest that it is certainly important to move quickly to address these issues. The current position, as I understand it, of the U.S. to support a 2- to 3-month rollover in the first instance of consideration of MONUC's mandate, renewed mandate, might just put this process at an unnecessary and unfortunate degree of risk. There really is an element of urgency about moving fast on this broad range of issues.

I think we are all acutely conscious of the scale of the security problem, with approximately 300,000 Congolese still under arms as members of various armed groups and armies of the parties to the relevant peace agreements. We have, in addition, the 8,000 to 12,000 Rwandan Hutu rebels from the FDLR, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, a number of whom did, of course, participate in the 1994 genocide, and between 500 and 1,000 rebels perhaps from Uganda. They also need to be disarmed and repatriated to country of origin, but achieving this will require a great deal of cooperation and action by the respective governments.

In the short term, a degree of security is notionally provided with MONUC's military forces present, but this force with its present authorized strength of just 10,800 is impossibly thinly stretched, and I draw attention to the contrast between the situation in the DRC and in West Africa where in the 3 contiguous countries of Liberia, Syria and in the Ivory Coast, an area just about a quarter of the size of the Congo, we have there presently a total of 30,000 troops.

The three big issues which have to be addressed for the MONUC mission, first of all, is the number of troops. To enable MONUC to

really begin to perform its proper range of functions including border monitoring, which has been emphasized in the previous discussion, the number of troops must be increased, at a minimum by another brigade of 4,000 to 5,000 but preferably doubled to 20,000 plus, with a strong, highly mobile rapid reaction capability being part of that.

A second concern is the capacity of the troops that are there on the ground. Virtually all of the United Nations forces come from developing nations that have, it has to be said, demonstrated varying degrees of capability and application. It will be very helpful in the Congo as elsewhere if more highly trained and well supplied troops were to be contributed by the developed countries to United Nations missions, this one in particular. At the very least, countries like the U.S. can make other contributions, including improvement of the technical surveillance and intelligence capabilities of MONUC, whether that is provided on the ground or through national assets.

Thirdly, there is the question of the scope of the mandate. The mandate, as outlined, in the present Security Council resolution, 1493, and endorsed in 1533, is barely sufficient to make clear beyond argument MONUC's obligation to maintain security to the absolute extent of its capacity, especially in relation to its obligation to protect civilians from physical violence. And the mandate, as presently crafted, gives no real encouragement at all to MONUC acting proactively to generally support the transition and, as necessary, to support the armed forces of the transitional government.

Adjusting MONUC's mandate in any formal way will, of course, be difficult and contentious. Use-of-force mandates always are, but I would like to make the point that the risks are huge of MONUC not having the authority, not having the capacity, not having the will to judiciously use force where this does become necessary to crush those who would be spoilers of this peacebuilding process.

As to improving regional relationships, we all know that the critical player here is Rwanda, which does remain legitimately interested in the continued presence of the Hutu rebels of the FDLR. We believe that the FDLR forces in fact—and this is partly in response to your earlier question—no longer constitute a strategic threat to Rwanda in the sense that, in our judgment, they don't have the capacity to actually invade Rwanda or to threaten its army. But they can certainly mount small-scale incursions, and they certainly can be regarded as a threat to civilians on both sides of the border.

The current DDR Program, Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, has not the desired impact. MONUC states that it has repatriated 3,000 to 4,000 Rwandans, but it is difficult to say how many of these were actual fighters. Regardless of how many have gone back to Rwanda, the key problem is how to deal with those that remain in the DRC. And part of the answer here has to be for the international community to apply, again, pressure on the transitional government in Kinshasa to muster the necessary political will and required resources to disarm the renegade forces in the eastern Congo with assistance from MONUC.

But persuasion also requires some carrots as well as sticks. There must be incentives for the FDLR to disarm and return to

Rwanda, something the government of Rwanda has to assist by launching a genuine process of political dialogue and national reconciliation with its exiled enemies, as tough a call as that might be.

Rwanda's role, generally, remains very controversial. As I have said, it does have legitimate security interests and certainly has considerable influence in the eastern DRC, but other motives do appear to be impeding a rather more cooperative approach, not least its interest in exploiting to the country's advantage Congo's resource riches and maintaining influence on its national government.

The report of the United Nations group of experts, which was released just yesterday, has examined the role of the regional actors, not least Rwanda, in supplying arms and giving other support to parties in the DRC and has come out with some quite explicit conclusions to the effect of there being both direct and indirect support certainly to the renegade troops of Mutebusi and Nkunda during their operations recently against the transitional government army.

We urge the U.S. to support the recommendations of that inquiry, also the earlier conclusions of the panel on economic exploitation, and to continue to exercise your country's influence in the eastern DRC—sorry, to continue to encourage Rwanda to exercise its influence in a responsible manner, with the United States reminding it that sustainable peace in the DRC is the best way to protect its own interests.

It can certainly be argued that improving the relationship between Kigali and Kinshasa will be best achieved through direct dialogue and diplomatic means, which the U.S. Government, which has good relations, of course, with both sides and Uganda as well, is very well placed to encourage and facilitate. If this behavior that has been documented pretty plausibly by the United Nations group of experts does, however, continue and the dialogue route fails, then it will obviously be necessary to consider a more robust range of responses.

In terms of finally building political capacity, the transitional government is, of course, meant to be doing just that. It is meant to be transitional. But one of the problems facing the DRC has been rather too much politics within the transitional government and not enough actual governing, something to which, I suppose, those of us who have been in this business are not all together immune from understanding.

But while the transitional government is limited both by resources and capacity, it has to be said that any improvement on those fronts is being impeded by the major players who are continually jockeying with advantage with an eye on the forthcoming elections.

We see a particularly important role in response to this reality for the International Committee Assisting the Transition, CIAT, which is made up of the Ambassadors of interested countries, including the U.S., which we see as being in a fairly unique position, not only to identify the needs of the transitional government but also to hold it to account, cautioning the governments and the more difficult individuals within it when their actions are inconsistent

with the undertakings they have made on security sector and judicial and general governmental and political reform.

The CIAT hasn't, in our judgment, been active enough in representing its views, the views of its member countries and in providing a forum for cooperation by Kinshasa's major international partners. It needs to do much more.

So, in summary, we are calling on the U.S., along with others, to do the following things. First of all, with respect to security, to support a substantial increase in the troop level for MONUC, at least another brigade, preferably a doubling; secondly, to assist MONUC in improving its technical capabilities for surveillance and intelligence-gathering; and, thirdly, to support, if possible, a more robust mandate for MONUC that will in fact allow it and encourage it to use force where necessary.

With respect to regional relationships, we do support and urge that the U.S. support the recommendations of the Panel of Experts, both on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the just published group of experts on the question of arms embargo and its penetrability. We strongly encourage direct dialogue between Kigali or continuing direct dialogue of the kind that has been facilitated by the United States, Kigali, Kinshasa and Kampala. And, as I said, we encourage Rwanda to create internally the political and social conditions that will encourage those Rwandans still in the DRC to return home.

And on the subject of strengthening political capacity, we need to work to strengthen CIAT's role in assisting and, where appropriate, guiding the transitional government as well as providing support for independent government and non-governmental organizations and supporting in particular the work of bodies on the justice and reconciliation front.

My final word is simply this: The transition in the DRC is not irreversible, and recent events have shown how easily this whole process can be derailed. The consequences of that derauling should be apparent to anyone who has followed the history over the last 10 years in the Great Lakes. The United States has very greatly increased its focus on Africa, and that is much to be admired for a whole variety of reasons in recent times. It does have strong relationships with most of the countries that are here involved.

It is in the interest of the United States to promote peace and stability in Africa, but this can't be achieved with this continued conflict and instability in the very heart of the continent, and the U.S., as a result, has a particular responsibility, I believe, to do its absolute utmost to change the situation in the way that we have indicated.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Evans follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARETH EVANS, PRESIDENT,
INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP (FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA)

I thank Chairman Royce and the ranking member, Congressman Payne, for inviting me to testify on behalf of the International Crisis Group on the current very fragile situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The timing of this hearing is absolutely crucial, coming two weeks before the mandate of the U.N. Mission in the Congo (MONUC) comes up for review in the Security Council. That mission risks failure if it is not strengthened and supported.

The Congo still bears both colonial scars and the consequences of more than three decades in the iron grip of an accomplished kleptocrat, President Mobutu—aided

and abetted largely by the West during the Cold War, then unceremoniously dropped. The policy objective for the international community is to make it possible for the Congolese to finally take control of their own lives and resources.

A year ago, the international community joined the citizens of Congo in welcoming a transitional coalition government that seemed to represent an end to the 1998–2002 civil war in which more than 3 million people lost their lives, mostly through war-induced disease and starvation. The principal Congolese opponents signed agreements to adopt a post-transition constitution; to hold the first democratic elections in Africa's third-largest nation; to establish a truly national army; to disarm, demobilize and resettle or repatriate both irregular Congolese fighters and Rwandan Hutu rebels in the east of the country; and, for the first time since Congo's independence from Belgium 44 years ago, to work for the good of Congo's long-suffering but incredibly resilient people.

A year later, President Joseph Kabila's government of transition is barely intact, little has been done to draw up a new constitution, and even less to prepare for elections scheduled for next year. Although some effort has been made to establish an integrated high command, the creation of the new Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo—through successfully integrating the previous government army, former rebels backed by Uganda and Rwanda and former Mai-Mai tribal fighters—has not succeeded. In part this results from lack of funds but also because the government has not been able to extend its authority throughout a country the size of the United States east of the Mississippi. Fighting last month for control of the eastern city of Bukavu, as well as renewed clashes between tribal militia in the north-eastern district of Ituri, have raised serious concerns about the future of the transition. And although Congo is now—according to Victor Kasongo of the country's Center for Evaluation, Expertise and Certification—producing \$1 billion a year in diamonds, most Congolese continue to endure conditions of extreme poverty, deprived of even the most basic protection and social services.

The current situation in Congo has its roots in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide of minority Tutsis and political moderates from the Hutu majority in neighboring Rwanda: two subsequent wars that began in eastern Congo in 1996 and 1998 destabilized the entire Great Lakes region of central Africa. Last year's agreement ended the four-year conflict and the international community has supported its implementation principally through the peacekeeping operation, UN Mission in the Congo (MONUC), created by the UN Security Council in 2000. The Council has extended MONUC's mandate each year since, with the most recent authorization, on 28 July, 2003 in Resolution 1493, granting MONUC a partial mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. On July 30 the mandate for MONUC will expire: the US mission to the UN currently favours a two-month extension in the first instance, in the hope that an agreed strategy will materialize by the end of September.

The International Crisis Group has been working in Congo since 1998 and has five field-based analysts in the region. Our latest Africa Briefing, published 7 July 2004 and entitled *Pulling Back from the Brink in the Congo*, deals with the events last month in Bukavu. Our research indicates that the immediate areas of concern that are crucial to the success of the political transition in Congo are security, regional relations and political capacity, and this testimony focuses on each of these in turn. The key questions are whether the United States and other governments, with their other current preoccupations and priorities, have given sufficient support both to MONUC, and to the equally important political side of the transition.

ENHANCING SECURITY

There are approximately 300,000 Congolese under arms—members of the various armed groups and armies of the parties to the relevant peace agreements. There are at least 40,000–50,000 others in different parts of the country who are armed but not party to any peace agreement and who remain a threat to peace and stability. Controlling them all and ensuring that they ultimately are disarmed and demobilized or incorporated into the new legitimate national army is crucial to the security not only of the DRC, but of the region as a whole. In addition to these Congolese there remain 8,000–12,000 Rwandan Hutu rebels from the FDLR (Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), a number of whom participated in 1994 genocide, and between 500 and 1,000 rebels from Uganda. These also need to be disarmed and repatriated to the country of origin, but achieving this also requires cooperation and action by their respective governments.

In the short term, a degree of security is provided where MONUC's military force is present. However, this force, with an authorized strength of just 10,800, is thinly stretched across a vast country. In contrast, the three UN missions in the contiguous West Africa countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast, an area about

a quarter of the size of the DRC, have a total of 30,000 troops. As we saw during the recent capture of Bukavu, 600 UN troops were no deterrent to the 2,000–3,000 renegades confronting them. Similarly, despite having 4,000 troops in the district of Ituri, a focus of international attention last year, MONUC has been unable to intervene to stop the fighting that recently broke out between militias, causing at least 50 deaths. Hundreds of civilians have fled across the border into Uganda, and this could lead to an escalation of conflict across the entire district.

While the presence of UN troops in the DRC has allowed a degree of progress towards stability, the mission suffers from a number of weaknesses that limit its ability to deal with the apparent threats. Issues which have to be addressed are the number of troops, the quality of the troops and the nature of the mandate itself, as well as the effectiveness of the DDR program.

Number of Troops. At present the majority of the force is configured with a brigade in Ituri, a smaller brigade in the provinces of North and South Kivu and two remaining battalions providing security as a 'neutral force' in Kinshasa. These troops are barely sufficient to provide security in these three main areas, let alone deal with an increase in conflict within these regions or elsewhere in the DRC. The mission has no rapid reaction force either within or from outside the DRC to reinforce its deployed forces or to meet any contingencies. Clearly the number of troops must be increased at a minimum by another brigade of 4,000–5,000. Given the size of the country, the range of tasks and the threats, a doubling of the force to some 20 000 would not be unreasonable. But even a relatively modest increase of one brigade would allow the mission to constitute a reaction force and expand its operations to control the borders in the east of the country where there is movement of arms, exploited resources and rebel or renegade forces.

In addition to the troop increase within the DRC, a 'strategic' reserve needs to be made available to meet any escalation beyond MONUC's capacity that could endanger the lives of Congolese civilians, UN and international staff and the peace process. The existence of this reserve would greatly improve the resolve of the mission to meet its tasks. The EU-led Operation Artemis to Ituri from July to September last year provided just such a force, allowing for the stabilization of the UN mission and bringing a degree of normalization that has largely continued and has allowed MONUC to expand its influence. In light of recent events, a similar force needs to be identified and made available through standby arrangements; such a force would best come from either NATO or the EU.

Capacity of Troops. Virtually all the UN forces come from developing nations and have demonstrated varying degrees of capability and application. It would be very helpful, in the Congo as elsewhere, if more highly-trained and well-supplied troops were contributed by developed countries to UN missions. If this is unlikely to occur, then there are other areas in which nations like the United States can make invaluable contributions, including the improvement of the technical surveillance and intelligence capabilities of MONUC. Such capabilities, whether provided 'on the ground' or through national assets, would greatly enhance MONUC's capabilities to anticipate and respond to threats, as well as its ability to interdict the movement of troops and material across borders as mandated under UN Security Council Resolution 1553 of 12 March 2004. Better equipment—including night vision and thermal imagery equipment for both aerial and ground use—would also significantly enhance MONUC's capability.

Scope of Mandate. The mandate outlined in Security Council Resolution 1493, and endorsed in resolution 1533, is barely sufficient to make clear beyond argument MONUC's obligation to maintain security to the absolute extent of its capacity, especially in relation to its obligation 'to protect civilians and humanitarian workers under imminent threat of physical violence'. The use of force by UN troops is always a contentious issue for many member states and within the UN. However, the risks of not judiciously using force where needed jeopardizes not only lives but the mission itself. A collapse of MONUC—like that which nearly occurred for the UN mission in Sierra Leone in 2000, before outside assistance from the UK saved it and stiffened its resolve—would not only be an enormous setback for the DRC but a severe blow to peacekeeping in Africa and elsewhere. While the use of force cannot solve all the problems in the DRC, it should be an option available to MONUC as needed, with MONUC given sufficient resources to make the option deliverable. A strengthened MONUC mandate has the additional benefit of promoting a higher degree of mission accountability, eliminating alibis for inaction in the face of imminent loss of civilian life or grave threats to the peace process.

DDR. The long-term resolution of the DRC's security needs lies in an enduring political solution within the country and good relationships with its neighbors. As part of the former, progress needs to be made in the disarming and return of most of the former Congolese combatants to civilian life as part of the wider process of

Security Sector Reform. The current focus is on the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of 200,000 of those troops that make up the former armies of the participants in the Transitional Government. The World Bank has provided \$200 million to fund this program, but a shortfall of \$61 million persists. The remaining 100,000 ex-combatants are to be retrained and integrated into the new Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the FARDC, which are to gradually assume responsibility for the DRC's security needs. While funding is available to disarm 200,000 former fighters and send them home, little bilateral or multilateral funding is available to establish the FARDC. The US government and military can play a vital role in providing funding and direct assistance to allow the Congolese to assume responsibility for their own security.

IMPROVING REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The 1996–97 and 1998–2002 conflicts in the DRC drew in at least seven other African countries, and a number of foreign rebel groups as well as allied Congolese factions. What happens in the DRC is of direct concern to all its neighbors, particularly Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi along its eastern border.

Rwanda. At the core is the relationship with Rwanda whose main concern is the continued presence of Hutu rebels of the Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, or FDLR, many of whom participated in the 1994 genocide. ICG estimates that Congo is at present home to some 8,000–12,000 such fighters under arms. Rwanda continues to assert that their presence constitutes a threat and objects to what it sees as the failure of the Congolese, MONUC and the international community in general to deal with the issue. As long as this presence remains Rwanda will continue to assert its right to self-defense. ICG believes that the FDLR forces no longer constitute a strategic threat to Rwanda, i.e. they do not have the capacity to invade Rwanda or threaten its army. However, they do represent a threat to civilians on both sides of the border. The current DDR program for foreign combatants facilitated by MONUC and funded by the World Bank and the Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) is based on voluntary participation; it has not had the desired impact. MONUC states that it has repatriated 3,000–4,000 Rwandans but it is difficult to say how many of these were actual fighters, partly because, as MONUC acknowledges, many were without arms prior to being sent home. It is also difficult as the issue itself is tied up in regional politics and is often used for rhetorical purposes. Regardless of how many have gone back to Rwanda, the key problem is how to deal with those who remain in the DRC.

How to remove the FDLR from DRC territory is a difficult and complex problem, but one that is at the core of improved regional relationships and security. The solution lies in the use of carrots as well as sticks: there must be incentives for the FDLR to disarm and return to Rwanda, something the government of Rwanda must assist by launching a process of political dialogue and national reconciliation with its exiled enemies.

In addition, there must be disincentives to the FDLR to discourage them from remaining on Congolese territory. Both an enhanced MONUC and the transitional government can take appropriate actions to achieve this. As pointed out in the report of the UN Group of Experts on the DRC, published on 15 July 2004, the Transitional Government of the DRC provided weapons to FDLR units “until at least October 2003.” The international community must apply pressure on the Transitional Government in Kinshasa to muster the political will and required resources to disarm renegade forces in Eastern Congo, with assistance from MONUC.

In addition to its concern about the FDLR, Rwanda asserts that it is the guardian of those Congolese Tutsis who have their origins in Rwanda but who have been in the Congo for generations. Members of this group have in the past been Rwanda's strongest allies in the DRC, although the main political party that now represents their interests, RCD-Goma, is a participant in the Transitional Government. But the fighting last month in Bukavu was carried out by RCD-Goma dissidents and eight of their representatives in parliament have just withdrawn and returned to Goma, their stronghold in the east. Moreover, some Congolese of Tutsi origin have increasingly dissociated themselves from Rwanda in recent months. As it is the case in many places, issues of citizenship and ethnicity are easily manipulated by ambitious politicians and are dangerous fuel to add to any fire. All parties in the DRC and Rwanda must be encouraged to desist from using ethnic-based rhetoric to achieve political or military ends. The Transitional Government has presented draft legislation establishing the conditions of citizenship of all Congolese, but it has already raised concerns among the Rwandophones in the east.

Rwanda has legitimate interests and considerable influence in the eastern DRC. However, other motives appear to impede a more cooperative approach, such as its

interest in exploiting to its advantage Congo's riches and maintaining influence in its national government. The UN Panel on Economic Exploitation in the DRC has already identified some factors that warrant consideration. Additionally, the report by the UN Group of Experts released just yesterday has examined the role of Congolese and regional actors in supplying arms to the parties in the DRC, determining that Rwanda provided both direct and indirect support to the renegade troops of Jules Mutebutsi and Laurent Nkunda during their operations against the FARDC. We urge the US to support the recommendations of these inquiries and encourage Rwanda to exercise its influence in the Eastern DRC in a responsible manner and remind it that a sustainable peace in the DRC in the best way to protect its interests.

Improving the relationship between Kigali and Kinshasa will be best achieved through direct dialogue. The meeting on 25 June between Presidents Joseph Kabila and Paul Kagame, hosted in Abuja by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and strongly backed by the US and the UK, was a step in the right direction. However, such dialogue should not be the consequence of extraordinary events or external pressure but a normal and regular process to deal with bilateral and regional issues. In this respect the US government, which has good relationships with the DRC and Rwanda—and Uganda—is strongly placed to facilitate the necessary confidence-building dialogue and measures.

Uganda. As the UN Security Council has stated, most recently in its Presidential Statement of 22 June 2004, Uganda should not interfere in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. President Museveni has assured Western diplomats that Uganda would not intervene militarily in the DRC and Kampala has declared its support for the Congolese Transitional Government and MONUC. However, some suspect that Uganda continues to provide both political and logistical support to several militia groups in Ituri, using them as proxy forces. Among the key Ituri militias that continue to receive support from Uganda are Jerome Kakwavu's Forces Armees du Peuple Congolais (FAPC), Chief Kahwa Mandro's Parti Pour l'Unite et la Sauvegarde de l'Integrite du Congo (PUSIC) and lately Njabu Ngabu's Front des Nationalistes et Integrationnistes (FNI). As demonstrated by the early July clashes between FNI and FAPC, these militias engage in activities that undermine the fragile peace process in the DRC. Allegations of human rights abuses by MONUC forces in Ituri could also provoke attacks on MONUC installations by the Ituri militias.

Uganda has an interest in maintaining and expanding its influence over control of natural resources in the DRC and securing positions in the Transitional Government for its allied militias. While it is unlikely that Uganda would risk international furor by reoccupying Ituri, refugee flows and instability on its border will encourage it to take a greater interest in influencing events in the DRC. If the crisis in the Kivus remains unresolved and if Uganda-backed Ituri militias continue to be excluded from the Transitional Government, greater Ugandan involvement in the DRC would become more likely. The future possibility of armed Ugandan intervention in the Congo, therefore, cannot be ruled out.

Uganda is also concerned about continued presence of Ugandan rebel groups in southern Ituri and northern North Kivu. Any deterioration of the security environment in eastern Congo may encourage UPDF cross-border operations aiming to deactivate the danger posed by these Ugandan rebels.

Burundi. Burundi has also been warned by the UN Security Council not to provide any support to armed groups in the DRC. Burundi is rightfully concerned about incursions into its territory by Rwandan rebels based in eastern Congo but should not engage in any cross-border belligerent activities aiming to neutralize these forces. As encouraged by the Security Council, the Transitional Government in Bujumbura should facilitate the provision of international humanitarian assistance for Congolese refugees in Burundi. Direct dialogue is the best means to secure and maintain friendly relations between Burundi and Congo. The two latest meetings of the Foreign Ministers of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi (11 July in Brussels and 14–15 July in Washington) are a welcome step in that direction.

BUILDING POLITICAL CAPACITY

The agreements which led to the establishment of the Transitional Government in June 2003 were in many respects a series of tenuous compromises by the signatories, and while there has been power-sharing at the upper levels of political and military power in accordance with the "1+4" formula, much of the machinery of governance remains unchanged since major hostilities ceased. The Transitional Government has little capacity to actually govern or to deliver public administration, particularly in the distant east. While this is partly the result of the security environment it is also caused by the destruction of infrastructure and the loss of experi-

enced civil servants, including police and the judiciary. For instance, the Transitional Government has just appointed a District Commissioner and subordinate Territorial Commissioners for the troubled Ituri district, but they have no capacity to take up their assignments in any substantive way, even in areas where MONUC has a presence, because of a lack of resources. Similarly the local police in the district who have been trained by MONUC are unpaid and ill-equipped. The cost of rehabilitating public administration in the DRC will be high, but it is, after the provision of security, the process that will most enhance the lives of ordinary Congolese.

The Transitional Government is meant to be just that—transitional. But one of the problems facing the DRC is the excess of politics within the Transitional Government, and not enough actual governing. While the Transitional Government is limited both by lack of resources and capacity, any improvement in these is impeded by the major players who continually jockey for advantage with one eye on the elections that are supposed to take place next June.

The International Committee Assisting the Transition (CIAT), made up of the ambassadors of interested countries, including the US, is in a unique position not only to identify the needs of the Transitional Government but also to provide guidance on overcoming the considerable difficulties it faces. This should include cautioning the Transitional Government or individuals within it when their actions are inconsistent with the undertakings they have made: the reunification, the pacification, the reconstruction, the restoration of the integrity and the authority of the state over all the country; national reconciliation; the formation of a national, unified and restructured army; the organization of free and transparent elections at all levels and the establishment of a democratic and constitutional regime; and, the establishment of structures for a new political order. However, the CIAT has not been active enough in representing its views and in providing a forum for cooperation by Kinshasa's major international partners. Security Sector Reform, which has to date and is likely to continue to be provided on a bilateral basis, is one area where greater consensus on policy and action by the body would have an exponential effect. As always all assistance and support must be contingent upon meeting reasonable standards of transparency and democratic accountability. A key objective of the international community must also be to support the institutions that will contribute to a sustainable democracy in the DRC. These include an independent electoral commission, human rights organizations and the judiciary.

On the issue of justice, all parties to recent conflict have been associated to one degree or another with crimes against the Congolese people, and the Congolese expect justice to be both seen and done. The agreements establishing the Transitional Government have granted a degree of impunity to members, but this should not be immutable. At some time in the future those charged with crimes will have to account for them, and appropriate bodies such as the moribund Truth and Reconciliation Commission need to commence their work. In addition to the processes of Congolese justice, the International Criminal Court will have a role to play. In April this year President Kabila referred events in the DRC to the ICC, and while its jurisdiction only covers crimes committed since 1 July 2002, there are ample cases, such as massacres in Ituri in mid-2003, that warrant investigation and prosecution. ICG strongly supports the principles of the ICC not only because we believe in justice but also because we believe that the prosecution of those that have perpetrated crimes will act as a deterrent to others and therefore contribute to conflict prevention and resolution, which is ICG's primary concern.

CONCLUSION

In short, we are calling on the United States, along with others to do the following:

With respect to security:

1. Support a more robust mandate for MONUC that will allow it to use force where necessary.
2. Support an increase in the troop level for MONUC of, as a minimum, another three battalions and associated support elements.
3. Assist MONUC in improving its technical capabilities for surveillance and intelligence gathering.
4. Both through MONUC and CIAT, support the Security Sector Reform program in the DRC, especially the integration and retaining of the new DRC army.
5. Support the integration and retraining of the new Congolese army.

With respect to the regional relationships:

1. Support the recommendations of the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the DRC and the UN Group of Experts on the DRC
2. Strongly encourage direct dialogue between Kigali, Kinshasa and Kampala.
3. Encourage Rwanda to create the political and social conditions within Rwanda that will encourage those Rwandese still in the DRC to return home.

With respect to helping strengthen the DRC's political capacity:

1. Work to strengthen CIAT's role in assisting, and where appropriate, guiding the Transitional Government.
2. Promote greater coordination within CIAT and between CIAT and MONUC.
3. Provide support for independent governmental and non-governmental bodies and organizations.
4. Support the workings of bodies pursuing justice and reconciliation in the DRC

The transition in the DRC is not irreversible, and recent events have shown how easily the process can be derailed, the consequences of which should be apparent to anyone who has followed the history of the last 10 years in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The United States has greatly increased its focus on Africa for a variety of reasons over the last few years and has strong relationships with many of the countries involved in recent conflicts in the DRC. It is in the interest of the United States to promote peace and stability in Africa, but this cannot be achieved if there is continued conflict and instability in the heart of the continent.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Evans.

Mr. Dees?

**STATEMENT OF LEARNED DEES, SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER,
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY**

Mr. DEES. Thank you for inviting me to testify today. I would like to thank you, personally, Chairman Royce, and also you, Congressman Payne, for holding this hearing today on a very important issue.

I think we can say fairly that Congo is at its crossroads, and it is a crisis before us. And I think we should examine the situation in that context. Many of the points that I made in my longer prepared statement have already been repeated and expounded on by the participants today. I do want to accent a number of things.

I would like to accent the fact that Congo's problem has internal and external causes, and both are equally important. The report that came out by the United Nations Panel of Experts this week spoke about the external problems, particularly the meddling of Uganda and Rwanda. That Panel of Experts used satellite, on-the-ground interviews, and the American expert who is part of that panel, is perhaps the most foremost expert on small arms transfer into Africa. So I think it is important to accept the reality in that report, that Rwanda in fact has command and control support over the troops that took over Bukavu. I think we have to accept that as fact.

The internal problems in Congo are also significant. Congolese politicians and their entourages profit from the delay. Clearly, the report in its detail shows you how much is available in terms of resources in Congo. There is a lot at stake. Thus the proliferating militias, more than two dozen at last count, have no political agenda but continue to prey on innocent civilians, and they control the vast resources of the eastern Congo. This remains perhaps the most significant cause of violence and instability in the Congo.

I think it is also worth noting there is a great irony in the all-inclusive peace agreement, which we are trying to implement. Indeed, the success or failure of the accord depends largely on getting those responsible for war to reinvent themselves as patrons of peace. That stark irony promoted considerable skepticism about whether in fact a peace accord was therefore workable.

Yet despite these doubts, there has been progress. The progress has been slow and torturous in Kinshasa. The instruments of the transition are very, very, very slow, but I think we face the reality that, generally, looking at Congo has been seen as a can't-do situation, a pessimistic situation, but the reality shows something different.

One of the main reasons for the progress in the transition is the work of civil society, for example. Congo is known for its civil society, and the pressure it puts on politicians is significant. I refer to civil society as really the constituency for peace in Congo.

I think in looking at the crisis currently, we have to look at the role of MONUC. There has been repeated confusion over the group's mandate and how aggressively to enforce it. Within Congo, this has only solidified the perception that MONUC is at best a paper tiger and at worst a Trojan horse. As the instrument intended to enforce the will of the international community, MONUC has been woefully inadequate.

To be fair, they are undermanned, but I think what is more important is looking at what their political strategy is and what they have done well. My grandfather used to say if you are driving a car and you are having problems, you need to pull it over and take up the hood and look at what the problem is. I think the renewal of the MONUC mandate gives us an opportunity to look at what has been done well and what the problem is before we get into whether we need more troops.

One of the things that is necessary is to develop and have the resources to implement a strategy to have peace in the East. The question has arisen whether elections are possible if MONUC continues to work in the West as it has on getting the transition, that is one-half of the equation, but having peace in the East is an equal and important part of the equation.

I will just conclude by mentioning some recommendations. As a staff member of the National Endowment for Democracy, it is not in that context except as a personal observer, long-time personal observer of the situation in Congo. I would suggest treating the current situation in Congo as a crisis. The situation in Darfur has focused attention on immediate crisis and a long-term problem. The situation in eastern Congo, in general, and Goma, specifically, threatens to produce a Darfur-like crisis with similar humanitarian and political implications.

I would also suggest using the situation in Goma as a test case for crisis management. If MONUC is there to manage crisis, there is no better place to start than the reality in Goma today. Use the upcoming discussion of the Security Council on the renewal of MONUC's mandate to examine the mission and the performance of MONUC in order to improve its performance.

I think it has been mentioned before that there is a collaborative link between the U.S. Government in terms of military cooperation

with both Uganda and Rwanda. Those also offer levers to influence their behavior. Lack of cooperation in Congo should result in termination of the bilateral cooperation agreement.

As part of the strategy for the east of the Congo, the international community should focus on two issues: General demobilization and repatriation of the FDLR forces in Congo. It is my understanding that the Pentagon has done a study on the FDLR Interahamwe situation in the East.

It would be useful to see what the conclusions to that study were: Identify and pressure spoilers or other negative forces who may be working against the aims of the transition; make an explicit link between culpability, amnesty and cooperation, especially against those individuals who block the process; be willing to consider United States military assistance in helping reform the Congolese army; and last but not least, expand support for civil society to initiate, sustain crucial interventions, promoting peace, putting an end to impunity, reducing ethnic tension and, most importantly, preparing the Congolese for their first democratic election in 4 decades.

I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dees follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LEARNED DEES, SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Sub-Committee:

I welcome the opportunity to be here to testify at today's hearing on *The Democratic Republic of Congo Peace Accords: One Year Later*. I would also like to thank you Chairman Royce and also you Congressman Payne and all of the members of the Committee for holding today's timely hearing and for your concern about the crisis in the Congo. I would also like to thank you both for your support for the National Endowment for Democracy over the years.

As the members of the panel are aware, the transition in the Democratic Republic of Congo is at a crossroads. Fighting in Bukavu in May and June of this year provided proof that the transition, in the words of a recent International Crisis Group briefing, is not synonymous with peace. Indeed, the virus of violence is still prevalent in Eastern Congo, especially in Ituri, where despite the efforts of a beefed up presence of UN peace keepers with an expanded mandate, militias continue to kill at will, and in North Kivu, panic about a return to war has led to an ongoing mass evacuation of Goma.

The crisis in Congo is exacerbated by a long list of well known problems, both internal and external. Internally, Congolese spoilers—politicians and their entourages who profit from a lack of progress in the transition—continue to find ways to block the process, including surreptitious arming of militias. In many ways, the zone of conflict in the Kivu regions is a proxy fight which serves to protect the interests of those who benefit from the status quo. Thus the majority of the proliferating militias, more than two dozen in the east of the country at last count, have no political agenda, but continue to prey on innocent civilians and fight for control of the vast supply of natural resources in the hinterland of Congo. This remains a significant catalyst for violence.

Externally, neighboring countries, Uganda and Rwanda, continue to sponsor the renegade forces within Congo which are at the root of much of the violence. A draft report by a UN appointed group of experts, leaked last week, asserted that Rwanda actively recruited, trained and sheltered the renegade soldiers who staged last month's violent take over of Bukavu. According to the report, Rwanda provided both a rear base for Congolese militias, and exerts command and control over some of the same forces. One of the leaders of the take-over of Bukavu, Jules Mutebutsi, and many of his troops, have been granted refugee status in Rwanda, and are protected by Rwandan troops. Laurent Nkunda, another one of the leaders of the recent Bukavu violence, is still on the loose in North Kivu, and threatening to wreak havoc there.

In response to the takeover of Bukavu and the military impotency of both the UN peacekeepers and the Congolese national army, President Joseph Kabila sent 10,000

troops to the east of the country. The resulting tensions with neighboring Rwanda raised concerns that a return to all out war was imminent. Critical diplomacy by the US government and by the Africa Union helped lower the temperature, but did not extinguish the flame that ignited the fire.

The latest conflict has exposed major weaknesses in the transition and raised doubts about its viability. The resulting crisis has also had political ramifications across the country and may have been a factor in the alleged coup attempt last month in Kinshasa. Only decisive action combining domestic and international pressure targeting those blocking the process or promoting conflict can save the transition and avert war.

ARRIVING AT THE CROSSROAD: THE TRANSITION ONE YEAR LATER

I would like to focus my comments on how we arrived at this crossroad and what we can do to salvage the transition. In assessing the trajectory of the progress of the peace process in the last 12 months, it is worthwhile remembering a bit of relevant history. Fourteen years have passed since the late President Mobutu Sese Seko's famous speech in which he acknowledged that the one-party system had been a failure and henceforth he would begin a transition to democracy.

Today, a decade and a half later, the latest chapter in the Congo's transition without end could rightfully be called a dream deferred. The country's already fragile societal and political fabric has been repeatedly shredded by a deadly cycle of political crises, ethnic conflicts, humanitarian disasters and war. Without going into the well-known details it is worth remembering that the conflict in the Congo has led, directly and indirectly, to the deaths of more than an estimated 3.5 million people, the displacement of millions more and the outright destitution of the majority of the nation's 60 million people. Bluntly speaking, the situation in Congo currently remains calamitous and is, indeed, the world's worst long-term humanitarian disaster.

It is in this context that the breakthrough represented by last year's peace agreement offered both a rationale and a roadmap for optimism. The agreement sought to bring together the armed belligerents, the non-armed opposition, and civil society, in order to create a transitional arrangement leading to elections within 36 months. It is worth noting that accord was signed as a result of intensive internal pressure from ordinary Congolese citizens fed up with war, and consistent pressure from the international community, led by South Africa the African Union, and the United States anxious to put an end to a conflict known as Africa's first World War.

Last year, the United Nations Security Council strengthened the mandate for the Military Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). It increased the size of the force to 10,800 soldiers and included a provision allowing for the unambiguous use of force in fulfilling its mandate.

The complex agreement, a power sharing arrangement in which a president would share power with four vice presidents, was predicated on the cooperation and good will of all the actors. Indeed, the success or failure of the accord depends largely on getting those responsible for war to reinvent themselves as patrons of peace. Given this stark irony, there was considerable skepticism about whether, in fact, the peace accord was workable.

EARLY SIGNS OF PROGRESS

Despite the doubt, one year later we can say that substantive progress has been made. Indeed, a transitional constitution was signed into law, a transitional government sworn in, and a transitional parliament with more than 500 members has begun promulgating legislation to enable the transition, and an electoral commission began laying the groundwork for elections.

In Kinshasa, a vibrant, independent media is playing an important watchdog role and there are almost as many media outlets: radio, television and newspapers as there are opinions. Indeed the capital, Kinshasa, is a vibrant political city filled with the normal intrigue one would expect in a country which is now in its 14th year of political transition.

In the interior, local governors and military commanders were named and assumed their duties, often after a protracted series of give and take negotiations. The moves have, in many cases, extended the authority of the Congolese state to areas where it had been absent for the better part of the last decade, although in other areas nominations have only solidified a status quo hostile to reunification and political change.

Another positive change has been the re-establishment of key economic and transportation links severed because of the war. Air traffic now links all the major cities of the country, with private companies now plying many of the routes. River traffic along the Congo river reconnected Kisangani with the capital Kinshasa and just this

month the vital rail connection between Kindu, one of the country's most isolated regional capitals, and Lubumbashi was re-established.

Congolese civil society has exerted internal pressure on issues ranging from advocacy on election legislation, initiating discussion on strategies to end impunity for human rights abuses (now supported by promises of prosecution by the International Criminal Court), peace education, and insuring the free flow of information via a vibrant independent media. Civil society has played a key role in keeping politicians aware of the desire for peace and provided a mass-based momentum for moving the transition forward.

External pressure, both bilateral and multilateral, has also contributed to progress. The two main international institutional levers of pressure have been the *Comite International d'Accompagnement de la Transition (CIAT)* which includes representatives of all the member countries of the security council, Belgium, South Africa, Zambia, and Angola and the European Union has used the carrot and stick approach to encourage progress, and the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), which, most successfully, has made progress in dampening down the levels of violence in Ituri province where violence has directly led to more deaths than anywhere in the conflict.

This tangible progress, especially late last year, created a sense of momentum crucial to overcoming inertia and pessimism.

THE GENESIS OF A CRISIS

But despite the progress the most recent news is bad. The recent events in Bukavu, which were preceded earlier in the year by multiple discoveries of arms caches, shoot-outs by competing regiments of soldiers, brazen arms smuggling and overt threats of violence, have left the impression that not only was war imminent, but that preventative action would at best be pro-forma. In the same way political progress in Kinshasa created momentum for peace, ignoring violence and rising political tensions in the east of Congo has led to a fatalistic climate of pessimism and *deja vu*. The same situation is repeating itself today in Goma. Local officials, civilian and military are threatening members of civil society, soldiers are infiltrating the city, and the free flow of arms continues in the region and in the city.

There has been, I think, inordinate focus on the technical mechanisms of the transition, particularly the elections, at the expense of solving the crisis of violence in the east. While extensive attention of the Kinshasa-based international community has been paid to the details and speed of the parliament's enabling legislation about the transition, equal amounts of time and political capital have not been spent on stopping the rampant arms smuggling, stopping recruitment and training of militias in North Kivu and South Kivu, and ways to jump start a moribund demobilization program. The strategy seems to have been that peace in the east of Congo would come from political progress in the west. Focus on elections seems to have become an end rather than a means to an end.

Another key link in the chain of crises affecting the Congo's transition is the woefully inadequate crisis performance of MONUC. The revamped and reinforced contingent of peace keepers has been slow and indecisive. Nowhere is this more evident than in its performance before and during the crisis in Bukavu. Repeated confusion over the group's mandate and how aggressively to enforce it has only solidified the perception in Congo that MONUC is at best a paper tiger, at worst a Trojan Horse. As the instrument intended to enforce the will of the international community, MONUC has been woefully inadequate.

To be fair, MONUC is undermanned at its currently mandated level of 10,800 soldiers, but it could bolster its efficiency by developing and implementing, in collaboration with the international community and the Congolese Transitional Government, a political strategy aimed at sorting out the problems of violence in the Kivus. In that context enforcement of its already robust mandate to lead the demobilization process, monitor the movement of armed groups in North and South Kivu, track the movement of weapons, and to inspect and seize any illegal weapons which contravene UN resolution 1493 would thus be an extension of a comprehensive plan of not only what could be done, but a strategy of how to do it.

The legacy of seven years of war in Congo has left the Congo on the verge of collapse. Only a strong desire for peace and a strong sense of Congolese national identity have prevented moves toward secession. Yet, despite these realities, ethnic tensions are at an all time high, and xenophobia directed, especially, though not exclusively, at the Hutu and Tutsi communities present a particular challenge. These issues risk being exploited by politicians during any future electoral period, as well as a pretext for outside intervention by Congo's neighbors.

Congo is also host to thousands of Rwandan soldiers and militia members responsible of genocide. Although they have coalesced into a group which now includes members not culpable for genocide, they present a particular challenge for the international community which bears a good deal of responsibility for their presences in Congo. The Rwandan government regards them alternately as perpetrators of genocide, mortal enemies seeking to reverse the current political order in Rwanda, and as a convenient pretext for involvement in Congolese internal affairs. Thus these soldiers are seen by the government of Rwanda as a foil and a foe, and by the Kinshasa government as an occasional ally. It is ordinary Congolese, however, who are the foremost victims of these marauding militiamen.

NED SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Congo is known for its vibrant civil society, which encompasses NGOs, religious institutions, trade unions and independent media. In a country where many of the prominent politicians are associated with the era of independence, NGOs in particular have proven to be an important training ground and reservoir for emerging political leadership. This role was explicitly acknowledged when civil society was designated as an equal partner in the peace talks and a quota of seats in the government was actually set aside for their representatives. As a result, at least five key transitional institutions including the election commission, the media oversight commission, the upper and lower house of parliament, and the truth and reconciliation commission are all headed by well-known members of Congo's long established and well organized civil society.

For many years now, NED has been one of the foremost international donors supporting Congo's democracy movement, and the DRC remains NED's number one priority in Africa. NED's first grant was made to a human rights group, *La Voix des Sans Voix*, in 1991. Last year NED made 38 new direct grants to Congolese groups concerned with human rights, free press, democracy education, and conflict resolution. The American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS) also received a NED grant to help revitalize Congo's trade union movement. In fact, NED supported the NGO efforts of three of the five civil society leaders named to head key transitional institutions.

Civil society NGOs continue to play a major role across the country. Often, they represent local initiative in the face of crisis. Other times they have become the leading agents of social change and development. In eastern Congo, where the devastation has been the worst, civil society is the leading voice for peace and non violence. In Kisangani, a coalition of human rights organizations, many of which are NED grantees, including *Groupe Lotus*, *Les Amis de Nelson Mandela*, *Groupe Lufalanga*, *Justice et Liberation*, and several others, have joined forces to resist ethnic scapegoating and have preserved a climate of ethnic tolerance in the face of political volatility. In Butembo, civil society members, led by local businessmen, intellectuals, NGO leaders and religious figures have negotiated local ceasefires, and even taxed themselves to raise enough money to build a university, construct a dam to provide electricity to the city, build a teaching hospital and numerous other major projects in the face of war. These efforts provide both an example of the leadership and vision which civil society is capable of providing in Congo.

Supporting such efforts can never completely replace the efforts of a state, but the cost benefit ratio suggests that these efforts are well worth the investment. Thus, whether negotiating a ceasefire, working to resolve ethnic conflict, reporting human rights violations, or improving the lives of their fellow citizens, Congolese civil society groups are likely to continue to play a vital role in strengthening the demand for peace and working to make elections possible.

In conclusion it is clear that despite progress towards peace, that a return to war, with all the political and humanitarian consequences, is quite likely. Identifying and coercing cooperation from all the negative forces trying to block or stall the transition is critical in putting the transition back on track. Elections can only happen if this important groundwork is done, and even then sticking to the timetable will require a cohesive and well planned strategy to overcome the logistical challenges in organizing elections. Thus, a focus on stopping violence by isolating the perpetrators and their sponsors as well as assisting the institutions of the transition will lead to an end of Congo's perpetual transition and bring it back from the brink.

Taking of my hat as a staff member of the National Endowment for Democracy, which does not make policy recommendations and putting on my hat as a long-term watcher of events in Congo, I would like to conclude by offering some personal recommendations.

THE CRISIS AT HAND: RECOMMENDATIONS

- Treat the current situation in Congo as a crisis and respond accordingly. The situation in the Darfur region of Sudan has helped focus attention on an immediate crisis and longer term issues involving the sincerity of all actors in the search for peace. The situation in eastern Congo in general and in Goma specifically threatens to produce a Darfur-like crisis with similar humanitarian and political implications.
- Use the situation in Goma as a test case for crisis management. Publicly identify the destabilizing forces in Goma by name, apply pressure to encourage their cooperation, and clearly signal the will of the international community to apply appropriate sanctions against individuals (including the potential for prosecution of the International Criminal Court) and countries which promote or support armed factions or conflict. This formula can be applied generally to all of the negative actors within Congo as well governments outside of Congo, especially Rwanda and Uganda.
- Use the upcoming discussion at the Security Council on the renewal of MONUC's mandate to examine the mission and performance of MONUC. Clarify questions about when and how MONUC can intervene. Provide additional resources, both human and logistical to implement the provision on weapons monitoring and seizure, as a priority. Compel MONUC's leadership to develop, in collaboration with the transitional government of DRC, a strategy for pacifying eastern Congo.
- Use the collaborative link of USG direct military cooperation with Uganda and Rwanda as a direct lever to influence their behavior in Congo. Continued cooperation should be explicitly and publicly linked with cooperation from both countries in stopping direct and indirect support for armed factions and individuals in the Congo. Lack of cooperation should result in a termination of the bi-lateral cooperation agreement.
- As part of a strategy for the east of the Congo, the international community should focus on two key issues: general demobilization and identification, and repatriation of the FDLR forces in Congo. By encouraging Rwanda to create an environment conducive to their return, identify those FDLR forces willing to return and isolate those unwilling to return.
- Continue to encourage the transitional institutions to efficiently complete their tasks. Encourage expeditious passage of legislation on elections, amnesty and nationality to clear the way for movement toward meeting the goal of elections. Identify and pressure spoilers, or other negative forces who may be working against the aims of the transition. Be willing to make an explicit link between culpability, amnesty and cooperation against individuals who block the process.
- Be willing to consider allowing the US military to play a leading role in reforming and training the Congolese Army.
- Expand support for local civil society efforts to initiate and sustain crucial interventions promoting peace, putting an end to impunity, reducing ethnic tensions, and preparing the Congolese people for their first democratic elections in four decades.

Mr. ROYCE. We thank you for your analysis there and your suggested action items, Mr. Dees.

When I was there in Kinshasa, we saw some demonstrations that became rather heated over MONUC's perceived lack of protection for some of the Congolese, but nobody that I talked to wanted to see them leave. Their presence there was understood to be very important in terms of protection of the people in eastern Congo.

You rightly, I think, point to the importance of political will of the main Congolese political actors, and so I would ask you what sticks and carrots we have to use then on those who are often unwilling to move forward, enact the legislation necessary to set the conditions for the election? None of these individuals have been elected by Congolese citizens, so what carrots and sticks do we use to get them to move forward in preparation for elections?

Mr. DEES. I think there are both internal and external carrots. One carrot that was very effective in getting the accord signed originally was the domestic pressure within Congo directly on the actors. I think we can't underestimate they live in Congo, they live

originally was the domestic pressure within Congo directly on the actors. I think we can't underestimate they live in Congo, they live next to these people who want peace, and supporting that sort of constituency for peace, which will put pressure on, is significant.

More sort of heavy-handed, I think we have to realize that a lot of people in the transitional government are culpable for war crimes. There is a direct lever between amnesty, future prosecutions and cooperation. I think that should be individually put forth for individuals, particularly, who are blocking the process in Kinshasa.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Dees, what steps do you think can be taken to stop the struggle for control of the very abundant natural resources in the Congo, because, in my view, I think this is fueling and financing conflict.

And I was going to ask you and Mr. Evans also, in your research, who is benefiting from the illegal exploitation of these natural resources?

Mr. Dees?

Mr. DEES. I would say to the question of who is benefiting, there are countries that are benefiting. Clearly, the country of Rwanda is benefiting, the country of Uganda is benefiting, and individuals within those countries are benefiting. I think one of the solutions is to follow the money directly back to where it leads.

The report that was released this week goes into great detail about individual commanders, particularly in the Ugandan army, who are benefiting and control certain resources in eastern Congo. I think we have to trace the line of responsibility from the mine to the bank account, and I think those bank accounts have names.

Mr. ROYCE. And do you think there would be a way to get the transparency involved to look at these bank accounts maybe worldwide if we worked in concert with the United Nations or with the EU?

Mr. DEES. I think the actors are very aware of who is watching and what the consequences might be. If the consequences are seized bank accounts, people will pay attention. I think it is an important lever that must be considered if we want to disentangle the economic incentive from the conflict.

Mr. ROYCE. So maybe some smart sanctions focused on just that and empowering institutions or empowering governments through the Security Council or some action that we could take to achieve that?

Mr. DEES. I think they are long overdue.

Mr. ROYCE. All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Dees.

Mr. Evans?

Mr. EVANS. Well, there are plenty of trails to follow, and most of them lead back to Uganda and Rwanda, and they lead back through a number of different kinds of players—military personnel, commercial opportunists of one kind or another. It is quite difficult to track this stuff down because so much of it is straight physical transactions, cash economy stuff, without the usual paper trail that does help.

I know the International Criminal Court, if that is not too neuralgic a reference to make on this occasion, is certainly devoting quite a bit of its current investigative attention to the Congo, in

Ituri and the eastern Kivus to try to work out the significance and implications of these illegal resource exploitation issues. And I think all of the resources that we can put internationally in this would be very well spent.

Mr. ROYCE. Let me go to Mr. Payne for some of his questions, because we are getting short on time here.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. Let me ask both of you, do you think that the resources are directed from the presidential palaces or do you think that it is some persons working on their own or a combination of both? Either one of you. Both of you, please.

Mr. EVANS. Well, it is very hard to find the smoking guns of this kind of personal accountability and responsibility, but it is difficult to believe there is not a higher level of awareness as to what is going on. It is not necessarily to be assumed that that is endorsement, but nobody could be immune from some sense of the scale of the economic depredation that has been going on and the nature of the interests that are involved here.

Mr. DEES. I would agree. I think what we have seen in the reports that have documented specific names, we are looking at a free-for-all. Anybody and everybody who can is in on it.

Mr. PAYNE. You mentioned Rwanda and Uganda. Therefore, I assume that Zimbabwe has no resources that they are profiting from or nor have they profited from this conflict. Both of you, could you respond to that?

Mr. DEES. I didn't see anything in the current report about Zimbabwe, but, as I suggested, it is a free-for-all. And one of the interesting things that I saw in the report that I wasn't aware of was that the SPLA is also involved in the pillaging in Congo. So I am sure everybody who has any connection is doing the same thing.

Mr. EVANS. I think there was a pretty big payoff for Zimbabwe in the 1998 to 2002 period, which President Mugabe was certainly conscious of in diverting his generals there to benefit from. I don't think that has persisted since the Zimbabwe withdrawal, but it was certainly a serious phenomenon at that time, and it is part of the explanation for why the political dynamics are as they are in Zimbabwe at the moment.

Mr. PAYNE. And just real quick, there will be an election. Currently, there are 4 Vice Presidents and about 50 ministers. That can't be the way the government's going to be in the future, so how do you see the convergence of a workable government of 15 or so ministers that most governments have, or 20, and maybe 1 Vice President or 2? Do you feel that once it gets closer to that day, that you will find more conflict?

I think it is amazing that President Kabila's been able to manage as well as he has with Vice Presidents from competing groups who probably would like to be President. So I think that a masterful job has been done, even though it looks extremely bad, but under the circumstances, I think he has to be commended. What do you think when they start to break and bring the government closer together where people are then going to be left out?

Mr. EVANS. Well, there is always a tension between good governance imperatives and political imperatives, and we are going to see this in spades in this particular context. The difficulty is that the

formal vehicle for resolving these tensions is the constitution-making process, and we really haven't seen that getting to first base at the moment.

And that is one of the things on which we are saying the internationals should be putting real pressure on the players to really move forward effectively. And part of that pressure should address the substantive issue that you just have, because it would be a nightmare to create an all-in kind of government. In the future, you have got to have some more rational representative structures embodied in it if this country is ever going to be viable.

Mr. ROYCE. We will go to Mr. Meeks from New York.

Mr. MEEKS. I will be real quick because I know we have a vote on, but let me ask Mr. Dees, what role, if any—government, I believe, comes from the ground up—has the Congolese civil society played in the transitional government and how widespread is it? Is it throughout the country or in just one area? How much political space do you believe exists?

Mr. DEES. Well, I think given the history of the Congo with the collapse of potential government in the nineties, a civil society is everybody else and all their efforts, whether they are organized through NGOs or whether they are religious institutions like the Catholic or Protestant or Kimbangist Church, business people. So their efforts have been significant.

In my testimony, I highlighted the efforts in Butembo, which is in the corner, near Uganda. They have built hospitals, they have built roads, they have electrified the city. That represents what people who are forward-thinking in the Congo have done. They realize the state's not going to provide certain things for them, and they have done it themselves. That has also been replicated in things related to conflict resolution, preparation for the elections. So it is quite extensive, and it varies from region to region, but everybody realizes they have to look out for themselves.

Mr. MEEKS. Last question and then we will run. Let me just ask, those that are there on an interim basis, none of them have been elected by the people, et cetera, are there sticks and carrots that we are able to utilize now to compel them to do the right thing by way of civil society and others while they are in there or is there anything that we can do or any pressure that is being applied them currently?

Mr. DEES. I think the Congolese politicians keep any eye out for the mood on the street, because they can become victims of that mood. I think they are very aware of the Congolese people's desire for peace, and I think there is a very real desire for these elections to happen. I think what you will see as people put forth reasons for delaying elections, you will see a lot of direct pressure from individuals about getting that back on track.

Mr. MEEKS. That is very interesting. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROYCE. I want to thank our witnesses for making the trip down here. Mr. Dees, Mr. Evans, thank you. Again, Secretary Newman, thanks for being with us today.

And this meeting stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:38 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EN AVANT CONGO

CONGO NEEDS GREATER U.S. ENGAGEMENT

As the Democratic Republic of Congo commemorates the 44th anniversary of its independence from Belgium, the country is all but free. For the last thirty-nine years, the Congolese have toiled under various dictatorial and brutal regimes. Since 1998, more than 3.5 million Congolese have died from war, starvation and disease. Eastern Congo remains the bastion of foreign-backed militias and ragtag armed groups that have committed unspeakable atrocities on a helpless population. Congo's neighbors and multinational companies systematically loot and plunder its natural resources, while the people suffer. The United States can do more to help the Congolese free their country.

Like in June 1960, when the country gained elusive independence from Brussels, the Congolese people hope this year will bring real freedom. June 30, 2004 marked the beginning of the most critical year of the transition from war to peace: Congo is to hold its first free and fair elections in forty-four years in exactly one year. At this juncture, failure is not an option, as the future of the entire central African region depends on the outcome of the Congolese transition. Congo is to Central Africa what South Africa is to the southern region, what Nigeria is to West Africa, and Egypt to North Africa. None of Congo's nine neighbors will know real peace and prosperity if Congo's transition fails.

Under the leadership of South Africa in 2001, the African Union brokered a peace deal in Pretoria that brought various belligerents into a transitional government, inaugurated in June 2002. The Pretoria agreement, which was based on the Lusaka Accords, was an African success. But despite its political will, the African Union lacks the financial and military means to see Congo's democratic transition to fruition. The moment has come for the international community, particularly the United States, to show greater commitment for peace in Central Africa.

The people of Congo rest their hope in long-awaited elections, currently scheduled for June 2005. It is the promise of elections that makes the Congolese tolerate the current transitional government, with all of its faults. Failure to keep the promise of elections will constitute a major breach of social contract with dire consequences for Congo and its neighbors. Considering the ineffectiveness of the 1+4 formula, the international community should hold the transition government to the elections deadline of June 30, 2005. The international community should help pave the way for these elections, recognizing that there are significant obstacles and that the Congolese people need help from the United States and other allies to achieve this goal.

First, the international community should exert greater pressure on the power-sharing government to stay the course to elections. The transitional government has not performed well during its first year, lagging behind schedule on all major initiatives proscribed in the Pretoria Accords. Most transition government leaders do not have the people's interest at heart. They continue to behave as rebels, using their new positions in the national government as cover. At best, they seek to delay the democratic transition and bide their time in a position of power. At worst, they intend to derail the process completely, forcing a return to pre-war arrangements and the division of the country. Some transition leaders are guilty of war crimes and great atrocities against the very citizens they are supposed to protect, and thus have no chance in winning in elections.

The United States must identify those within the transition government who are actively and egregiously stalling the process. The U.S. should use credible threats of targeted individual sanctions, such as visa/travel bans or freezing of international

bank accounts. When applicable, the U.S. should support the efforts of the World Court's Chief Prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Campo, to bring war criminals to justice. A successful prosecution of a handful of militia leaders or former rebels in the current government will send a powerful message to those intent on playing the spoiler for elections.

To reach elections, the transitional government also needs extensive structural support, beginning with an independent, paid, and professional civil service to carry out government functions. Civil servants have not been paid in years and are forced to live off the very population they are supposed to serve. The transitional government should take steps to control corruption and mismanagement and use its limited revenue to pay civil servants.

Through bilateral assistance, the United States could provide the transitional government with additional grants or loans for this purpose until elections. An independent U.S.-Congolese commission could monitor salary distribution. USAID could work with the World Bank and other partners to help Congo update its salary distribution mechanism from easily stolen cash handouts to automatic deposits into individual bank accounts. Without a paid and professional civil service, government reforms will not be implemented.

For a successful transition to free and fair elections, Congo must also have a minimum level of security and stability. Without a strong national security structure, Congo remains a source of regional insecurity and a target for armed opportunists exploiting Congo's resources. If the current lack of stability persists, Congo will remain in a state of emergency, making it impossible to hold the much-needed elections. Congo needs a unified, well-trained, and paid army and police to protect its citizens and allow them to vote freely. As shown by recent events in Bukavu, various militia and rebel groups continue to defy the orders of the transition government with impunity and with support from neighbors Rwanda and Uganda. A capable Congolese national army is essential to put an end to regional instability, to enforce the decisions of the transition government, and to protect Congolese citizens from atrocities and exploitation.

At the signing of the Pretoria Accords and the beginning of the transition, the United States made a commitment to Congo to work with European allies to help train national security forces and police under the auspices of the transition government. To date, only Belgium has followed through on this commitment in terms of actual training of integrated army units. The United States can do more to provide logistical and programmatic expertise required for this crucial endeavor. The U.S. Congress should request a full accounting from the Department of Defense and the State Department of current activities to help rebuild Congo's security forces. Until Congo has a professional army and national police firmly in place, the region will not know peace.

The United States has a greater role to play in the Great Lakes beyond Congo's borders. For peace and stability in the region, a fully integrated U.S. foreign policy is needed. U.S. missions in New York (USUN), Kinshasa, Kigali and Kampala should implement complementary recommendations that support inclusive peace efforts in the region.

Last year's report by the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources accused both Rwanda and Uganda of prolonging the war so they could siphon off Congo's wealth with the help of multinational corporations. Neither Uganda nor Rwanda have significant deposits of gold, diamond and coltan, but both countries have become important exporters of these minerals. The Security Council, however, refused to release the report in its entirety or to take any measures to punish those named. By classifying the most damning portions of the report, the United Nations has become an accomplice to those who are guilty of atrocities and human rights violations. The United States should pressure the Security Council to declassify the report. In addition, the U.S. should open independent Congressional inquiries into U.S. companies named in the report and reevaluate our bilateral assistance to Uganda and Rwanda in light of these illegal activities.

Arms trafficking feeds the cycle of violence in eastern Congo. The United States should fully support and help enforce the UN embargo on the flow of illegal arms into Congo. The U.S. must support the findings of the UN Panel of Experts that was established by the Security Council to examine illegal arms transfers in the region. Given evidence in the Panel's July 2004 report, the U.S. government ought to reinstate its own bilateral arms embargo on Rwanda and Uganda, two of the main sources of illegal arms flow into Congo. The U.S. Congress should condition all bilateral assistance to both of these countries on their ceasing to arm these militias. The U.S. Congress should also urge the State Department to cooperate with initiatives before the Security Council to put "teeth" into the UN Panel of Experts report, including smart sanctions against those who are in violation of UN resolutions. Impu-

nity is not a democratic value, and failure to hold accountable those responsible for illegal arms trafficking in the Great Lakes region will only perpetuate the violence.

The Congolese people have sacrificed much the last forty-four years. Yet their desire for freedom has never dwindled. Their hope for a free and independent country rests on the upcoming elections. With a greater commitment, the United States can help Congolese reclaim their sovereignty and contribute to a lasting and stable peace in the Great Lakes region.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONSTANCE BERRY NEWMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE BETTY MCCOLLUM, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

August 2, 2004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Following the July 22, 2004 hearing at which Assistant Secretary Constance B. Newman testified, additional questions were submitted for the record. Please find enclosed the responses to those questions.

If we can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul V. Kelly".

Paul V. Kelly
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:

As stated.

The Honorable
Edward R. Royce, Chairman,
Subcommittee on Africa,
Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary Constance B. Newman by
Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Subcommittee on African Affairs
July 22, 2004

Question:

In your view, what is the current Congolese government's level of commitment to addressing gender-based violence in the DRC?

Answer:

We share your concern regarding violence against women in the region. The Ministry of Feminine Affairs is planning campaigns to counter sexual violence in all the provinces of the DRC. They are currently operating in Bukavu and Goma. The long-term plan is to set up "judicial clinics" to provide advice on legal procedures and psycho-social support. The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice promote the documentation of cases, and make some effort to bring them to court. The court system, however, suffers from corruption, and is often dysfunctional.

Senior officials of the transitional national government should do more to counter gender-based violence. They are cognizant of these problems, but their current major preoccupation is the disarmament and

demobilization of the scores of armed groups in the country, which could reduce gender-based violence.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary Constance B. Newman by
Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Subcommittee on African Affairs
July 22, 2004

Question:

Is anything being done to enhance the ability of authorities to investigate and prosecute against sexual and gender-based violence in eastern Congo?

Answer:

With USAID funding, Global Rights, a non-governmental organization (NGO), has drafted a law against sexual violence. The parliament expects to promulgate the law before the end of 2004. Campaigns are already underway to disseminate information of the new proposed law. With USAID funding, three NGOs (the International Committee of the Red Cross, Global Rights and Cooperation International) are working with local justice sector partners in Maniema, North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces to build their technical and managerial capacity. Thus far, one case has been prosecuted and 78 more cases have been brought before the courts.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary Constance B. Newman by
Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Subcommittee on African Affairs
July 22, 2004

Question:

How much funding is the State Department dedicating to address this insidious and pervasive problem in eastern Congo? Does this funding involve support for NGOs?

Answer:

The Administration will have spent \$5,058,688 from September 2003 to September 2006 to address gender-based violence in the DRC:

- \$1,758,988 (\$1,288,688 of Victims of Torture and \$470,000 Trafficking in Persons) is being spent by USAID on programs operated by international and Congolese NGO's in eastern DRC to provide health, psychosocial and judicial support, and socio-economic reintegration.
- \$2,500,000 has been provided by USAID's Victims of Torture Fund to expand support to victims of rape and sexual violence in eastern DRC.

- USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) is spending \$600,000 for medical care for victims of rape and sexual violence in the east. OFDA has also given UNICEF \$200,000 for emergency surgery for victims of rape and to train medical personnel.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Assistant Secretary Constance B. Newman by
Congresswoman Betty McCallum
Subcommittee on African Affairs
July 22, 2004

Question:

There is evidence that Congolese women are speaking out against these egregious abuses and human rights violations. How much funding and support are we providing to civil society organizations who are publicly campaigning against gender-based violence in the Congo?

Answer:

Virtually all of the \$5,058,688 that USAID is spending is channeled through civil society organizations. We work with these and other women's groups, organizations and support groups that provide medical, psychosocial, judicial, and socio-economic services to continue to find ways to address the needs of women, as well as their concerns for children and families. We will continue our dialogue with Congolese women, and develop ways to bring their communities, the transitional government and international community to work cooperatively and effectively to help these women.

